

William (John)

THE ⁽¹²⁾
CASE
Geo OF *Leury*
Lay-Communion
WITH THE
CHURCH
in Geo OF *Leury*
ENGLAND
CONSIDERED;

And the Lawfulness of it shew'd from the Testimony
of above an hundred eminent Non-Conformists
of several Persecutions.

Published for the satisfaction of the scrupulous, and to
prevent the sufferings which such needlessly
expose themselves to.

L O N D O N,

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in the Poultry. 1683.

Robert Smith & his Son

CASE

of

CHURCH

GLAND

...

...

...

TO THE
DISSENTERS
FROM THE
Church of England.

Dear Brethren,

YOU being at this time called upon by Authority to joyn in Communion with the Church, and the Laws ordered to be put in Execution against such as refuse it; its both your Duty and Interest to enquire into the grounds upon which you deny Obedience to the Laws, Communion with a Church of God, and thereby expose our Religion to danger, and your selves to suffering. In which, unless the cause be good, the call clear, and the end right, it cannot bring Peace to your selves, or be acceptable to God. Not bring Peace to your selves; For we cannot suffer joyfully the spoiling of our Goods, the confinement of our Persons, the ruine of our Families, unless Conscience be able truly to say, I would have done any thing but sin

A 2 against

Mr. Mide's
Farewel Sermon.
on 1 Cor. 1. 3.

Mr. Read's
Case, p. 4.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Continuat. of
Morn. Exer.
Ser. 4 p. 92.

Read, Ibid.

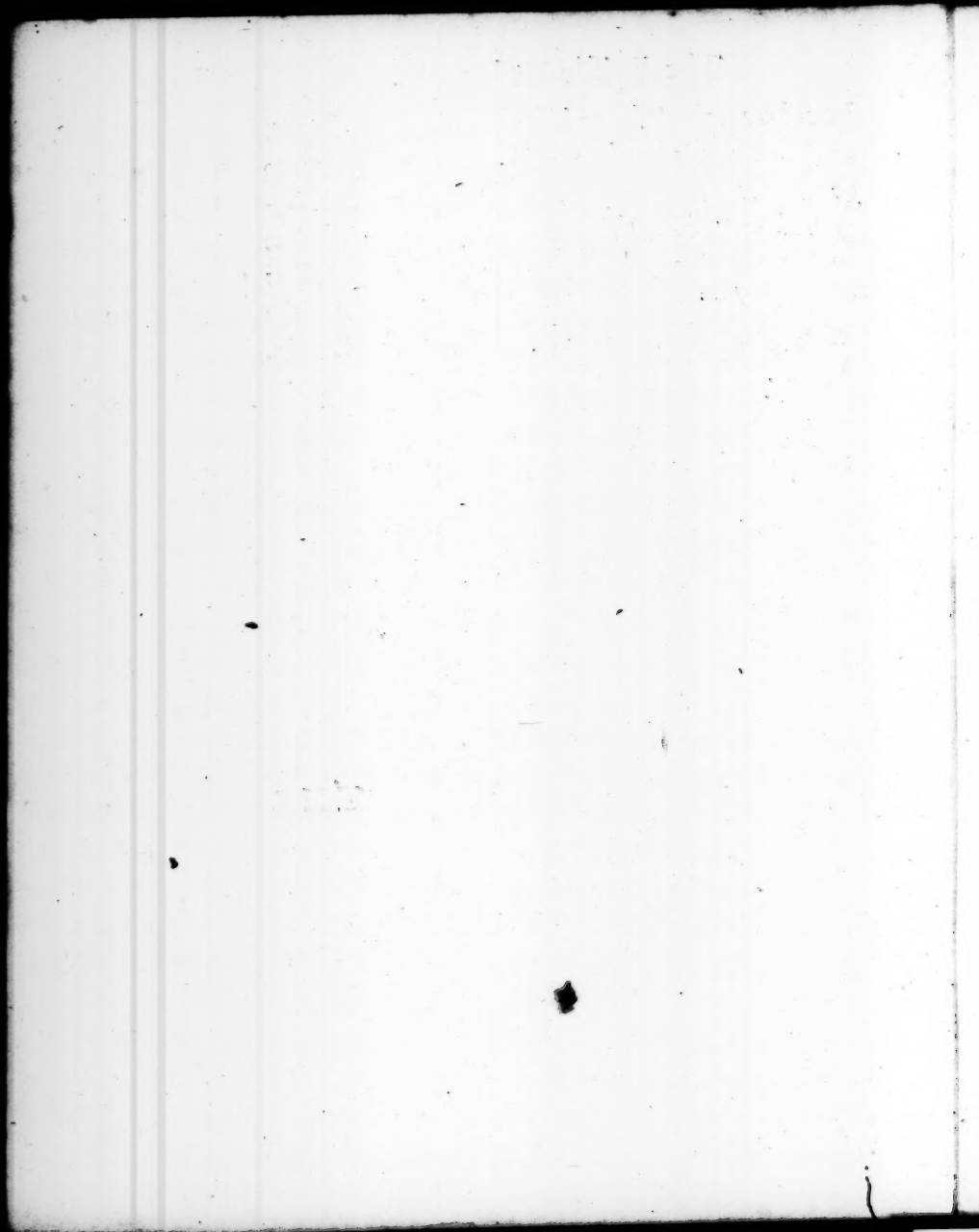
against God, that I might have avoided these sufferings from men. *Not be acceptable to God, to whom all are accountable for what portion he hath intrusted them with of the things of this life; and are not to throw away without sufficient reason; and who has made it our duty to do what we can without Sin in Obedience to that Authority which he hath set over us, (as you are told by some in the same condition with your selves.)*

To assist persons in this enquiry, I have observed that of late several of the Church of England have undertaken the most material points that you do question, and have handled them with that Candor and Calmness which becomes their profession, and the gravity of the Arguments, and which may the better invite those that are willing to be satisfied, to peruse and consider them. But because Truth and Reason do too often suffer by the prejudices we have against particular persons; to remove, as much as may be, that obstruction, I have in this Treatise shewed that these Authors are not alone, but have the concurrent Testimony of the most eminent Non-Conformists for them, who do generally grant that there is nothing required in the Parochial Communion of the Church of England, that can be a sufficient reason for Separation from it. The sence of many of these I
have

The Epistle Dedicatory.

have here collected, and for one hundred I could easily have produced two, if the Cause were to go by the Pole; so that if Reason or Authority will prevail, I hope that yet your satisfaction and recovery to the Communion of the Church is not to be despaired of: Which God of his infinite mercy grant for your own and the Churches sake. Amen.

THE



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THE

THE
NON-CONFORMISTS
P L E A
FOR
Lay-Communion
With the
CHURCH of *ENGLAND*.

THE Christian World is divided into two Ranks, Ecclesiastical and Civil, usually known by the names of *Clergy* and *Laity*, Ministers and People. The Clergy, besides the things essentially belonging to their Office, are by the Laws of all well-ordered Churches in the World, strictly obliged by Declarations or Subscriptions, or both, to owne and maintain the Doctrine, Discipline and Constitution of the Church into which they are admitted. Thus in the Church of *England* They do subscribe to the truth of the Doctrine more especially contained in the Thirty Nine Articles, and declare that they will use the Forms and Rites contained in the Liturgy, and promise to submit to the Government in its Orders.

B

The

The design of all which is to preserve the Peace of the Church, and the Unity of Christians, which doth much depend upon that of its Officers and Teachers.

Mr. Baxter's
Defence of the
Cure, part 2. p.
29.

But the Laity are under no such Obligations, there being no Declarations or Subscriptions required of them, nor any thing more than to attend upon, and joyn with the Worship practised and allowed in the Church. Thus it is in the Church of *England*, as it is acknowledged by a worthy Person, to whom when it was objected that many Errours in Doctrine and Life were imposed as Conditions of Communion, he replies, *What is imposed on you as a Condition to your Communion in the Doctrine and Prayers of the Parish-Churches, but your actual Communion it self?* In discouraging therefore about the lawfulness of Communion with a Church, the difference betwixt these two must be carefully observed, lest the things required only of one Order of Men should be thought to belong to all. It's observed by one, *That the original of all our mischiefs sprung from mens confounding the terms of Ministerial Conformity with those of Lay-Communion with the Parochial Assemblies; there being much more required of Ministers than of the People: private persons having much less to say for themselves in absenting from the Publick Worship of God, though performed by the Liturgy, than the Pastor hath for not taking Oaths, &c.* Certainly, if this difference was but observed, and the Case of Lay-Communion truly stated and understood, the people would not be far more averse to Communion with the Parish-Churches than the Non-Conforming Ministers are, as one complains; and whatsoever they might think of the Conformity of Ministers, because of the previous terms required of them, they would judge what is required of the people to be lawful, as some of them do. And as the Ministers by bringing

A Book licensed by Mr Cranford.

Baxter's Cure,
p. 311.

Continuat.
Morning-Exercise, Sermon 4.
p. 89.

bringing their Case to the Peoples may see Communion then to be lawful, and find themselves obliged to maintain it in a private capacity ; so the People by perceiving their Case not to be that of the Ministers, but widely different from it, would be induced to hold Communion with the Church, and to joyn with those of their Ministers that think it their Duty so to do ; and are therein of the opinion of the old Non-Conformists that did not act ^a, *as if there was no middle between separation from the Church and true Worship thereof, and subscription unto, or practice or approbation of all the corruptions of the same.* For ^b *though they would not subscribe to the Ceremonies, yet they were against separation from Gods Publick Worship,* as one of them in the name of the rest doth declare. So that as great a difference as there is betwixt presence and Consent, betwixt bare Communion and approbation, betwixt the Office of the Minister and the attendance of a private person, so much is there betwixt the Case of Ministerial and Lay-Communion : And therefore when we consider the Case of Lay-Communion, we are only to respect what is required of the people, what part they are to have and exercise in Communion with the Church. Now what they are concerned in, are either, The Forms that are imposed, the Gestures they are to use, and the Times they are to observe, for the Celebration of Divine Worship ; or, The Ministration, which they may be remotely suppos'd also to be concerned in.

The lawfulness of all which, and of all things required in Lay-Communion amongst us, I shall not undertake to prove and maintain by Arguments taken from those that already are in full Communion with the Church of *England*, and so are obliged to justify it ; but from those that in some things do dissent from

^a Rathband's Epistle to the Reader, prefixed to the grave and modest Confutation, &c.
^b Nichol's Plea for the Puritans.

it, who may therefore be supposed to be impartial and whose Reasons may be the more heeded as coming from themselves, and from such that are as forward in other respects to owne the miscarriages of the Church; as those that wholly separate from it.

For the better understanding of the Case, and of their Judgment in it, I shall consider,

1. What opinion the most eminent and sober Non-Conformists have had of the Church of *England*.

2. What opinion they have had of Communion with that Church.

3. What opinion they have had of such practices and usages in that Church, as Lay-men are concerned in.

1. *What opinion the most eminent and sober Non-Conformists have had of the Church of England.* And that will appear in these two things, *First*, That they owne her to be a true Church; *Secondly*, To be a Church in the main very valuable.

First, They owne her to be a true Church. Thus an Eminent Person saith of the old Non-Conformists, *They did always plead against the Corruptions of the Church of England, but never against the truth of her Being, or the comfort of her Communion.* And as much is affirmed of the present, by a grave and sober Person amongst them, *The Presbyterians generally hold the Church of England to be a true Church, though defective in its Order and Discipline.* And thus it's acknowledged in the name of the rest by one that undertakes their Defence, and would defend them in their Separation, *We acknowledge the Church of England to be a true Church, and that we are Members of the same visible Church with them.* And this they do not only barely assert, but do undertake to prove: This is done by the old Non-Conformists, in their Confutation of the Brownists, who

Bayly's Dissuasive, c. 2. p. 21.

Corbet's Discourse of the Religion of England, p. 33.

Non-Conformists no Schismatics. p. 13.

who thus begin, *That the Church of England is a true Church of Christ, and such an one, as from which whosoever wiltingly and willingly separateth himself, cutteth himself off from Christ, we doubt not but the indifferent Reader may be perswaded by these Reasons following:*

A grave and
sober Confut.
p. 1. &c.
p. 57.

“1. We enjoy and joyn together in the use of
“those outward means, which God hath ordained
“in his Word for the gathering of a visible Church,
“and have been effectual to the unfeigned conversion
“of many, as may appear both by the other fruits of
“Faith, and by the Martyrdom which sundry have
“endured that were Members of our Church, &c.

2. “Our whole Church maketh profession of the
“true Faith. The Confession of our Church, toge-
“ther with the Apology thereof, and those Articles of
“Religion which were agreed upon in the Convoca-
“tion-House, *An. 1562.* (whereunto every Minister
“of the Land is bound to subscribe) so far forth as
“they contain the Confession of Faith and the Do-
“ctrine of the Sacraments, do prove this evidently, &c.

So Mr. Ball: *Wheresoever we see the Word of God truly taught and professed in Points fundamental, and the Sacraments for substance rightly administred, there is the true Church of Christ, though the health and soundness of it may be crazed by many errors in Doctrine, corruptions in the Worship of God; and evils in the life and manners of men.* As much as this is also affirmed in the Letters passed betwixt the Ministers of Old England and New England, *It is simply necessary to the being of a Church that it be laid upon Christ the foundation, which being done, the remaining of what is forbidden, or the want of what is commanded cannot put the Society from the Title or Right of a true Church.*

Friendly Try-
al of the
grounds of Se-
parat c. 13.
p. 306.

A Letter of
many ministers
in Old England
to others in
New England.
p. 24

And if we enquire into the judgment of the present Non-Conformists, we shall find them likewise arguing,

guing,

*Jerubbaal; Or,
The Pleader
Impleaded, p.
18. & 27.*

going for it: Thus the Author of *Jerubbaal*, "The
" Essentials constitutive of a true Church, a re, 1.
" The Head; 2. The Body; 3. The Union that is
" between them: Which three concurring in the
" Church of England, Christ being the professed Head,
" She being Christ's professed Body, and the Catho-
" lick Faith being the Union-band whereby they are
" coupled together, She cannot in justice be denied a
" true (though God knows far from a pure) Church.

If we should proceed in this Argument, and consi-
der the Particulars, I might fill a Volume with Testi-
monies of this kind. The Doctrine of the Church is
universally held to be true and sound, even the
Brownists own'd it of old in their calm mood, who
declare, *We testifie to all men by these Presents, That we
have not forsaken any one Point of the true, ancient, A-
postolick Faith professed in our Land, but hold the same
grounds of Christian Religion with them.* See more in
Bayly's Dissuasive, c. 2. p. 20. 33. and Dr. Stillingfleet's
Unreasonableness of Separation, part 1. §. 9. p. 31.
The Presbyterians (if I may so call them for distinc-
tion sake) do owne it. So M^r Corbet, *The Doctrin of
Faith and Sacraments by Law established is heartily recei-
ved by the Non-Conformists.* So M^r Baxter, *As for the
Doctrin of the Church of England, the Bishops and their
Followers from the first Reformation begun by Edward
the VI, were sound in Doctrin, adhering to the Angu-
stan method express'd now in the Articles and Homilies,
they differed not in any considerable Point from those
whom they called Puritans.* The like is affirmed by the

Independents, *The Confession of the Church of England,
declared in the Articles of Religion, and herein what is
purely Doctrinal, we fully embrace* As to the Worship,
they owne it for the matter and substance to be good,

*Peace-Offe-
ring, p. 12.*

See Mr. Ba-
xter's Defence
of his Cure,
part 1. p. 64.

& part 2. p. 3. & *Wadsworth* in his Separation, yet no Schism, p. 60, 62. Mr. *Throughton's*
Apology for the Non-Con-formists, c. 3. p. 106.

and,

and for Edification. So the old Non-Conformists, as Mr *Hildersham*, *There is nothing in our Assemblies, but we may receive profit by it, &c.* And again, *There is nothing done in God's Publick Worship among us, but what is done by the Institution, Ordinance and Commandment of the Lord.* So among the present, it is own'd by both Presbyterians and Independents; by the former in the *Morning-Exercise*, *Why may it not be supposeable, that Christians may be moved by reasonable considerations to attend the Publick Forms, the substantial parts of them being thought agreeable to a Divine Institution, though in some Circumstantials too disagreeable.* So it's acknowledged, *That in private Meetings the same Doctrine and Worship is used as in the Parish Churches, only some Circumstances and Ceremonies omitted.* By the latter, *We know full well that we differ in nothing from the whole form of Religion established in England, but only in some few things in outward Worship.* But I shall have further occasion to treat of this under the third General. As for the Ministry of the Church, 1. It is acknowledged to be true, and for substance the same which Christ hath established. So Mr *Bradshaw*, *I affirm, That the Ministry of our Church-Assemblies (howsoever it may in some particular parts of the execution happily be defective in some places) is for the substance thereof that very same Ministry which Christ hath set in his Church.* This he speaks, as he saith, of those that do subscribe and conform according to the *Laws of the State.*

Letter 26. on
John, p. 121.

Morning-Ex-
ercise, Sermon 4.
p. 91.

Troughton's Ap-
pol. p. 104.

Peace-Offe-
ring, p. 17.

Unreasonable-
ness of the Se-
paration, p. 16.

2. That they have all things necessarily belonging to their Office; so the grave and modest Confutation maintains, *The preaching of the whole truth of God's Word, and nothing but it; the administration of the Sacraments and of publick Prayer, as they are all parts of the Ministers Office prescribed in the Word, so they are.*

Grave and mo-
dest Confuta-
tion, p. 28.

are all appointed to our Ministers by the Law.

Unreasonable-
ness of Separation,
p. 27-37.

3. They owne, That all the defects in it, whether in their Call or Administration, do not nullifie the Office. Thus much Mr Bradshaw doth contend for, *So many of our Ministers (who in the Book of Ordination are called Priests and Deacons) as in all Points concerning the substance of their Ministry, are qualified according to the intent of the Laws, have their Offices, Callings, Administration and maintenance, for the substance thereof ordained by Christ. And yet I deny not, but there may be some accidental defects, or superfluities in or about them all; yet such as do not, or cannot be proved to destroy the nature and substance of any of them. This is maintained at large in the Letter of the Ministers in Old England, &c. p. 86, 87.*

Apologet. Nar-
ration, p. 6.

Cotton's Infant
Baptism, p.
181.

And the like is also affirmed even by those of the Congregational way, so the Brethren in their Apology, *The unwarrantable power in Church-Governours did never work in any of us any other thought, much less opinion, but that the Ministry thereof [of the English Churches] was a true Ministry. So Mr Cotton, The power whereby the Ministers in England do administer the Word and Sacraments, is either spiritual and proper, essential to their Calling, or adventitious and accidental. The former they have received from Christ, &c. The latter from the Patron who presents, or the Bishop who ordains, &c. Whoever has a mind to see their Ordination defended may consult Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici, part 2. p. 12, 16, 17, 25, &c. Jus Divinum Regim. Eccles. p. 264, &c. Cawdry's Independency a great Schism, p. 116. and his Defence of it, p. 35, 37.*

Thus far therefore we see how far it is agreed, that the Church of England is a true Church in its Doctrine, Worship and Ministry. But when we come
to

to consider what the Church is they own thus to be true, there we shall find that they do differ. The Presbyterians generally own a National Church, and have writ much in the behalf of it, as may be seen in the Books quoted in the Margin *: others look upon it as a prudential thing, and what may lawfully be complied with; So Mr. Tombs || *It is no more against the Gospel to term the believers of England the Church of England, than it is to term believers throughout the World the Catholick Church; nor is it more unfit for us, to term our selves Members of the Catholick Church; nor is there need to shew any institution of our Lord, more for the one than the other.*

But those that will not own it to be a true Church in respect of such a constitution, or that speak doubtfully of it, do yet assert as much of the Parish Churches. Its acknowledged by all, that the distribution into Parishes is not of divine but humane institution; but withal, its thought by some ^a agreeable to the reason of the thing, and somewhat favoured by Scripture, and by experience has been found to be of such convenience, advantage, and security to Religion, that a person of great eminence hath more than once said ^b; *I doubt not but he that will preserve Religion here in its due advantages, must endeavour to preserve the soundness, concord and honour of the Parish Churches.* And another very worthy person saith ^c, *that the nullifying and treading down the Parish Churches is a Popish Design.* But whatever opinion others may have of that Form, yet all of one sort and another, agree that the Churches so called, are or may be true Churches. This was the general opinion of the old Non-Conformists. Thus saith a late Writer, who, though he is unwilling to grant that they did own the National Church to be a true Church, yet doth admit (as he needs

C

must

* *Jus Divinum*
Antisl. Evang.
p. 12. &c.
Brinsley's Church
remedy, p. 41,
42.
Cawdry *Inde-*
pend. a great
Schism, p. 60,
89, 172.
|| *Theodulia*, or
just defence. §.
15, 16. Pre-
face, &c. 9. §. 3.

^a *Croston's* reformation not separation, p. 10. and *Bethlehem* clouded, p. 101. &c.
Cawdry's *Inde-*
pend. a great
Schism, p. 132.
&c.

Church-Reformation, p. 42.
^b *Mr. Baxter's*
Plea for Peace,
Epist.

Serm. on *Gal.*
6. 10. p. 24.
Defence p. 21.
part 1. p. 36.

^c *Mr. Corbet's* account of the
Principles, &c.
of several Non-
conformists, p.
26.

Troughton's A-
pol. p. 103.

must at least) that they did own the several Parishes or Congregations in England to be true Churches, both in respect of their constitution, and also in respect of their doctrine and worship, and that there were in them no such intollerable corruptions, as that all Christians should fly from them. And even those that were in other respects opposite enough to the Church, did so declare; It was, saith Mr. Baxter, the Parish Churches that had the Liturgy, which Mr. H. Jacob the Father of the Congregational party wrote for communion with, against Fr. Johnson, and in respect to which he called them Separatists against whom he wrote. The same I may say of Mr. Bradshaw, Dr. Ames, and other Non-Conformists, whom the Congregational Brethren think were favourable to their way.

And if we will hearken to the abovesaid Author, he saith again and again, that the general sence of the present Non-Conformists both Ministers and People, is, that the Parishes of England generally are true Churches, both as to the matter of them, the people being Christians; and as to the form, their Ministers being true Ministers, such as for their doctrine and manners deserve not to be degraded. But lest he should be thought to incline to one side, I shall produce the testimony of such as are of the Congregational way. As for those of New-England, Mr. Baxter doth say, that their own expressions signify that they take the English Parishes that have godly Ministers for true Churches though faulty. Mr. Cotton professeth that Robinson's denial of the Parishional Churches to be true Churches, was never received into any heart amongst them; and elsewhere saith, we dare not deny to bless the womb that bare us, and the paps that gave us suck.

The five Dissenting Brethren do declare, We have this sincere profession to make before God and the World, that all the conscience of the defilements in the Church

Defence of his
Cure, part 2.
p. 178.

V. Letter of
Ministers of
Old England
to New, p. 49.

Apol. c. 4. p.
117.

Defence of his
Cure, part 2.
p. 177.

Way cleared,
p. 8.

His Letter, p. 3.
printed 1641.

V. Hooker's Sur-
vey, Preface,
& part 1. p. 47.

Church of England, &c. did never work in us any other thought, much less opinion, but that multitudes of the Assemblies and Parochial Congregations thereof, were the true Churches and Body of Christ. To come nearer, Dr. T. Goodwin doth condemn it as an error in those who hold particular Churches (those you call Parish-Churches) to be no true Churches of Christ, and their Ministers to be no true Ministers, and upon that ground forbear all Church-Communion with them in hearing, or in any other Ordinance, &c. and saith, I acquitted my self [before] from this, and my Brethren in the Ministry.

On the Ephes.
p. 487, 488,
489.

But the Church of England is not only thus acknowledged a true Church, but hath been also looked upon as the most valuable in the World; whether we consider the Church it self, or those that minister in it. The Church it self, of which the Authors of the grave and modest confutation thus write; *All the known Churches in the world acknowledge our Church for their sister, and give unto us the right hand of fellowship, &c.* Dr. Goodwin saith, *If we should not acknowledge these Churches so*

Pag. 6.

Ibid.

stated [i. e. Parish-Churches] to be the true Churches of Christ, and their Ministers true Ministers, and their order such, and hold Communion with them too in the sense spoken of, we must acknowledge no Church in all the Reformed Churches, &c. for they are all as full of mixture as ours. And Mr. J. Goodwin saith, that there was more of the truth and power of Religion in England, under the late Prelatical Government, than in all the Reformed Churches in the World besides. If we would have a Character of the Ministry of the Church of England, as it was then, Mr. Bradshaw gives it, Our Churches are not inferiour for number of able men, yea and painful Ministers, to any of the reformed Churches of Christ in foreign parts, &c. And

Sion College
visited.

Unreasonable-
ness of the Se-
paration, p. 97.

Mr. Baxter's
Cure of Church
Divisions, Dir.
56. p. 263.

certainly the number of such is much advanced since his time. But I cannot say more of this subject than I find in a page or two of an Author I must frequently use, to which I refer the Reader.

Before I proceed, I shall only make this inference from what hath been said, that if the Church of *England* be a true Church, the Churches true Churches, the Ministry a true Ministry, the Doctrine sound and Orthodox, the worship in the main good and allowable, and the defects such as render not the Ordinances unacceptable to God, and ineffectual to us; I think there is much said toward the proving Communion with that Church lawful, and to justify those that do join in it; which brings to the second general, which is to consider,

2. What opinion the sober and eminent Non-Conformists have of Communion with the Church of *England*? And they generally hold,

Papers for accommodation,
P. 47.

Reasons for the
Christian Religion, p. 464.

V. Annotations
on the Apologet.
Narrat. p. 17.

1. That they are not totally to separate from it; this follows from the former, and must be own'd by all them that hold she is a true Church; for to own it to be such, and yet to separate totally from it would be to own and disown it at the same time: So say the members of the Assembly of Divines, *Thus to depart from true Churches, is not to hold Communion with them as such, but rather by departing to declare them not to be such.* And saith Mr. Baxter, *nothing will warrant us to separate from a Church as no Church [which yet is the case in total separation] but the want of something essential to a Church:* But if the Church have all things essential to it, it is a true Church, and not to be separated from. When the Church of *Rome* is called a true Church, its understood in a metaphysical or natural sence, *as a thief is a true man, and the Devil himself, though the Father*

ther of lies, is a true spirit : But withal she is a false Church (as Mr Brinsly saith from Bishop Hall) an Heretical, Apostatical, Antichristian Synagogue : And so to separate from her is a duty. But when the Church of England is said to be a true Church, or the Parochial Churches true Churches, its in a moral sense, as they are sound Churches, which may safely be communicated with. Thus doth Dr Bryan make the opposition, *The Church of Rome is a part of the universal visible Church of Christians, so far as they profess Christianity, and acknowledge Christ their head ; but it is the visible society of Traiterous Usurpers, so far as they profess the Pope to be their Head, &c. From this Church therefore which is Spiritual Babylon, God's people are bound to separate, &c. but not from Churches which have made separation from Rome, as the reformed Protestant Churches in France, and these of Great Britain have done, in whose Congregations is found truth of Doctrine, a lawful Ministry, and a people professing the true Religion, submitting to, and joyning together in the true Worship of God.* Such a separation would (as has been said) unchurch it. This would be to deny Christ holds Communion with it, or to deny Communion with a Church with which Christ holds Communion, contrary to a principle that is, I think, universally maintained. "The error of these men saith Mr. Brightman *, is full of evil, who do "in such a manner make a departure from this "Church [by total separation] as if Christ were quite "banished from hence, and that there could be no "hope of salvation to those that abide there. Let "these men consider, that Christ is here feasting with "his members ; will they be ashamed to sit at meat "there, where Christ is not ashamed to sit ? Further, this would be a notorious Schism, so the old Non-

Arraignment
of Schim, p. 26.

Dwelling with
God, Sermon 6.
p. 289, 291.

* On Rev. c. 3.
V. Jenkin on
Jude, v. 19.
Allen Vindicie
Pietatis, se-
cond part p.
123.
Vindication of
Presbyterian
Government,
p. 130.
Cotton on John,
p. 156.

Conformists

^a Grave confut.
p. 57.
Cawdrey's In-
dependency
further pro-
ved, p. 135.

^b Brinsley's Ar-
raignment, p.
15, 24, 44.
^c Bailly's diffwa-
sive, c. 6. p.
104.

^d Ames's Puri-
tanismus Angl.
V. Parker on
the Cross, part
2. c. 91. §. 21.
Bax. Def. p. 55.
^e Apologet Nar.
p. 6.

^f Sacril. desert.
p. 76.

^g The Life of
Mr. J. Allen,
p. 111.

^h The Doctrine
of Schism, p.
64.

ⁱ Reasonable
account, &c.

Conformists conclude ^a, *because we have a true Church, consisting of a lawful Ministry, and a faithful people, therefore they cannot separate themselves from us, but they must needs incur the most shameful and odious reproach of manifest Schism; for what is that, saith another ^b, but a total separation from a true Church?* This lastly, would not diminish, but much increase the fault of the separation, as another saith ^c; *For it is a greater sin to depart from a Church, which I profess to be true, and whose ministry I acknowledge to be saving, than from a Church which I conceive to be false, and whose ministers I take to have no calling from God, nor any blessing from his hand.* This therefore is their avow'd principle, that total separation from the Church is unlawful: And this the old Non-Conformists did generally hold and maintain against the Brownists ^d; and the Dissenting Brethren did declare on their part ^e, *We have always professed, and that in those times when the Churches of England were the most, either actually overspread with defilements, or in the greatest danger thereof, &c. that we both did and would hold Communion with them as the Church of Christ.* And among the present Non-Conformists, several have writ for Communion with the Church against those that separate from it, and have in Print declared it to be their duty and their practice. So Mr Baxter ^f, *I constantly joyn in my Parish-Church in Liturgy and Sacraments.* Its said of Mr Joseph Allen ^g, *That he as frequently attended on the publick worship, as his opportunities and strength permitted ^h:* Of Mr. Brinsley, that he ordinarily attended on the Publick Worship. Dr. Collins saith as much of himself ⁱ. Mr. Lye in his Farewell Sermon doth advise his People to "attend the Publick Worship of God, "to hear the best they could, and not to separate, "but

* but to do as the old Puritans did thirty years before. Mr. Cradacot in his farewell Sermon professeth, That if that Pulpit was his dying Bed, he would earnestly persuade them to have a care of total separation from the Publick Worship of God. Mr. Hickman freely declares, I profess where-ever I come, I make it my business to reconcile people to the publick Assemblies, my conscience would fly in my face if I should do otherwise. And Mr. Corbet as he did hold Communion with the Church of England^k, so saith, That the Presbyterians generally frequent the Worship of God in the Publick Assemblies^l. Its evident then that it is their principle, and we may charitably believe it is their practice in Conformity to it. Thus Mr. Corbet declares for himself, "I own Parish-Churches, having a competent Minister, and a number of credible Professors of Christianity, for true Churches, and the Worship therein performed, as well in Common-Prayer as in the Preaching of the Word, to be in the main sound, and good for the substance or matter thereof: And I may not disown the same in my practice by a total neglect thereof, for my judgment and practice ought to be concordant. And if these two, judgment and practice, be not concordant, it would be impossible to convince men that they are in earnest, or that they do believe themselves while they declare against separation and yet do keep it up. Those good men therefore were aware of this, who met a little after the Plague and Fire to consider (saith Mr. Baxter) whether our actual forbearance to joyn with the Parish-Churches in the Sacrament [and much more if it was total] might not tend to deceive men, and make them believe that we were for separation from them, and took their Communion to be unlawful: And upon the reasons given in, they

Bonafus vapulans, p. 113.

^k Account of the Principles of the Non-Conformists, p. 26.

^l Discourse of the Religion, &c. p. 33. V. Mr. Read's Case, p. 15. Non-conformists Plea for Lay-Communion, p. 1.

Non-Conformists Plea for Peace, §. 17. p. 240.

they agreed such Communion to be lawful and meet, when it would not do more harm than good; that is, they agreed that it was lawful in it self.

2. They hold that they are not to separate further from such a true Church, than the things that they separate for are unlawful, or are conceived so to be; that is, that they ought to go as far as they can, and do what lawfully they may toward Communion with it. For they declare ^m, That to joyn in nothing, because they cannot joyn in all things, is a dividing practice, and not to do what they can do in that case is Schism, for then the separation is rash and unjust ⁿ. If therefore the Ministerial Communion be thought unlawful, and the Lay-Communion lawful, the unlawfulness of the former doth not bar a person from joyning in the latter. "The denying of assent and consent to all and every thing contained in the Book of Common-Prayer, doth not gainsay the lawfulness of partaking in that Worship, it being sound for the substance in the main, &c. as a judicious person hath observed. This was the case generally of the old Non-Conformists, who notwithstanding their exclusion from their Publick Ministry, held full Communion with the Church of England. We are told by a good hand, "That as heretofore Mr Parker, Mr Knewstubs, Mr Udall, &c. and the many Scores suspended in Queen Elizabeth, and King James's Reign; so also of latter times, Mr Dod, Mr Cleaver, &c. were utterly against even Semi-Separation; i. e. against absenting themselves from the Prayers and the Lord's Supper. So its affirmed of them by Mr Ball, They have evermore condemned voluntary Separation from the Congregations and Assemblies, or negligent frequenting of these

^m Burroughs Irenicum, p. 182.

ⁿ Vindication of Presbyt. Govern. Briefly Arraigned, p. 16. 32. Corbet's Plea for Lay-Communion, &c. p. 2.

Irenicum, by Discipulus de tempore, Junior, alias M. Newcomen, Epist. to Reader.

Friendly Tryal, c. 7. p. 121.

those Publick Prayers. And some of them earnestly press the People to prefer the publick service before the private, and to come to the beginning of the Prayers, as an help to stir up Gods Graces, &c. And others did both receive the Sacrament, and exhort others so to do, as I shall afterward shew. Again, if in Lay-Communion any thing is thought to be unlawful, that is no reason against the things that are lawful; This was the case of many of the godly and learned Non-Conformists in the last age, as we are told, *That were perswaded in their Consciences, that they could not hold Communion with the Church of England, in receiving the Sacrament kneeling without Sin; yet did they not separate from her. Indeed in that particular act they withdrew, but yet so, as they held Communion with her in the rest.* And thus much is owned by those of the present age, as one declares; "The Church of England being a true Church (so that a total separation from her is unwarrantable) therefore Communion with her in all parts of real solemn Worship, wherein I may joyn with her, without either let or sin, is a duty. So another faith of them; *They are ready and desirous to return to a full union with the Parishes when ever the obstacles shall be removed.* And again, *They hold Communion with the Parishes, not only in Faith and Doctrine, but also in acts of worship, where they think they can lawfully do it.* This those of the Congregational way do also accord to, that they ought in all lawful things to communicate with the Churches of England; not only in obedience to the Magistrate (in which case they also acknowledge it to be their duty as well as others) but also as they are true Churches; and therefore plead for the lawfulness of hearing the established Ministry, and undertake to answer the objections

D

Hilderham
Lect. on John.
R. Rogers's 7.
Treatises. Tr.
7. c. 4. p. 224.

Vindicat. of
the Presbyt.
Gov. p. 135.

Jerubbaal p.
28. 30.

Troughton's A-
pol. p. 107.

Mr. Nye's Case
of great and
present use, p.
4. and 5.
Mr. Read's Case,
p. 14.

* *Buryough's I-
renicum*, p. 183.

Lawfulness of
Hearing the
Publick Mini-
sters of the
Church of Eng-
land.

Nye's Case, p.
24, 25.

Theodulia; Or,
A just Defence
of Hearing, &c.
c. 10. §. 15. p.
369. c. 9. §. 8.
p. 319.

Treatise of the
lawfulness of
Hearing, &c.
p. ult.

jections brought against it, whether taken from the Ministers ordination * or lives, or the Church in which they are Ministers, &c. as you may find them in Mr. *Robinson's* Plea for it of old; and Mr. *Nye's* of late, as they are Printed together. Upon the consideration of which the latter of these thus concludes, "In most of the mispersuasions of these latter times, by which men's minds have been corrupted, I find, in whatsoever they differ one from another, yet in this they agree, That it's unlawful to hear in publick; which I am perswaded is one constant design of Satan in the variety of ways of Religion he hath set on foot by Jesuits amongst us. Let us therefore be the more aware of whatsoever tends that way. Of this Opinion also is Mr. *Tombs* (though he continued an Anabaptist) who has writ a whole Book to defend the Hearing of the present Ministers of England, and toward the Close of the Work hath given forty additional Reasons for it, and in opposition to those he writes against doth affirm, *Sure, if the Church be called Mount Sion from the preaching of the Gospel, the Assemblies of England may be called Sion, Christ's Candlesticks and Garden, as well as any Christians in the World.* I shall conclude this with what Mr. *Robinson* saith in this Case; viz. *For my self thus I believe with my heart before God, and profess with my tongue, and have before the World, that I have one and the same Faith, Spirit, Baptism and Lord, which I had in the Church of England, and none other; that I esteem so many in that Church, of what state or Order soever, as are truly Partakers of that Faith (as I account thousands to be) for my Christian Brethren, and my self a Fellow-member with them, of that one Mystical Body of Christ, scattered far and wide throughout the World: that I have always in spirit*

rit and affection, all Christian Fellowship and Communion with them, and am most ready in all outward Actions and Exercises of Religion, lawful and lawfully done, to express the same: And withal, that I am persuaded the hearing of the Word of God there preached in the manner and upon the grounds formerly mentioned, both lawful, and upon occasion necessary for me and all true Christians, withdrawing from that Hierarchical Order of Church-Government and Ministry, and the uniting in the Order and Ordinances instituted by Christ. Thus far He.

From what hath been said upon this Head we may observe, that though these Reverend Persons do go upon different Reasons, according to the Principles they espouse, though they agree not in the Constitution of Churches, &c. yet they all agree that the Parochial Churches are or may be (as I have observed before) true Churches of Christ, that Communion with such Churches is lawful, and that we are to go as far as we can toward Communion with them. Though they differ about the Notion of Hearing, as whether it be an Act of Communion, and about the Call of those they hear, yet they all agree in the lawfulness of it. And therefore to separate wholly in this Ordinance, and from the Parochial Churches as no Churches, are equally condemned by all.

3. They hold, that they are not to separate from a Church for unlawful things, if the things accounted unlawful are not of so heinous a nature as to unchurch a Church, and affect the Vitals of Religion; or are not imposed as necessary terms of Communion.

1. If the Corruptions are such as do not unchurch a Church, or affect the vital parts of Religion. So saith Mr Tombs, "Not every, not many

Theodulia. Answer to Preface §. 23. p. 47, 48.
Vid. Blake's Vindicta Fœd. c. 31. p. 229, &c.

Arraignment of Schism, p. 50.

Temple measured, p. 78.

Evangelical Love, p. 76.

Expos. on 1 Epist. John, p. 156.

“Corruptions of some kind do un-church, there
 “being many in Faith, Worship and Conversation
 “on in the Churches of *Corinth*, and some of the
 “Seven Churches of *Asia*, who yet were Golden
 “Candlesticks, amidst whom Christ did walk.
 “But such general, avowed, unrepented of errors
 “in Faith, as overthrow the foundation of Christian
 “Faith, to wit, Christ the only Mediator betwixt
 “God and man, and salvation by him, Corruptions of
 “Worship by Idolatry, in Life by evil manners, as are
 “utterly inconsistent with Christianity, till which in
 “whole or in part they are not unchurched. For till
 “then the Corruptions are tolerable, and so afford no
 “just reason to dissolve the Church, or to depart from
 “it. So Mr *Brinsley*, *Suppose some just grievances may
 be found among us, yet are they tolerable? If so, then
 is Separation on this ground intolerable, unwarrantable:
 in as much as it ought not to be, but upon a very
 great and weighty cause, and that when there is no remedy.*
 “So Mr *Nojes*, “Private Brethren may not separate
 “from Churches or Church-Ordinances, which
 “are not fundamentally defective, neither in Doctrine
 “or Manners, Heresy or Profaneness. To all
 “which add the Testimony of Dr *Owen* and Mr *Cotton*.
 “The former asserts, “That many errors in Doctrine,
 “disorders in sacred Administrations, irregular
 “walking in Conversation, with neglect and abuse
 “of Discipline in Rulers, may fall out in some Churches,
 “and yet not evacuate their Church-State, or
 “give sufficient warrant to leave their Communion,
 “and separate from them. The latter saith, *Unless you find in the Church Blasphemy, or Idolatry, or Persecution [that is, such as is intolerable] there is no just ground of separation. This is universally own'd: But if any one should yet continue unconvinced, let him*

him but peruse the Catalogue of the faults of nine Churches in Scripture, collected by Mr *Baxter*, and I perswade my self he will think the Conclusion infer'd from it to be just and reasonable. *Observe*, Cure of Church-Divisions, Dir. 5. p. 40. &c. *that no one member is in all these Scriptures, or any other, commanded to come out and separate from any of all these Churches, as if their Communion in Worship were unlawful. And therefore before you separate from any as judging Communion with them unlawful, be sure that you bring greater reasons for it than any of these recited were.*

2. They are not to separate, if the Corruptions are not so made the Conditions of Communion, that they must necessarily and unavoidably communicate in them. Mr *Vines* speaks plainly to both of these, "The Church may be corrupted many ways, in Doctrine, Ordinances, Worship, &c. And there are degrees of this Corruption, the Doctrine in some remote Points, the Worship in some Rituals of mans invention or custom. How many Churches do we find thus corrupted, and yet no Separation of Christ from the Jewish Church, nor any Commandment to the Godly of *Corinth*, &c. to separate. I must in such a Case avoid the Corruption, hold the Communion----- But if Corruptions invade the Fundamentals, the foundation of Doctrine is destroyed, the Worship is become idolatrous; and what is above all, if the Church impose such Laws of her Communion as there is a necessity of doing or approving things unlawful, in that Case, *Come out of Babylon*. The Churches of Protestants so separated from *Rome*."

But if the things be not of so heinous a nature, nor thus strictly required, then Communion with a Church under defects is lawful, and may be a Duty.

So

Account of the
Principles of
N. C. p. 8. and
Discourse of
Religion, §. 16.
P. 33.

Irenicum, c. 23.
p. 162, 163.

The Unreason-
ableness of the
Separation, p.
107.

Jerubbah, p.
12.

So saith M^r Corbet in the name of the present Non-Conformists, *We hold not our selves obliged to forsake a true Church as no Church for the corruptions and disorders found therein, or to separate from its Worship for the tolerable faults thereof, while our personal profession of some error, or practice of some evil is not required as the terms of our Communion.* And M^r Burroughs himself doth grant as much and more; for he saith, "Where these Causes are not [*viz.* the being constrained to profess, believe or practise contrary to the Rule of Faith, or being deprived of means altogether necessary, or most expedient to salvation] "but men may communicate without sin, professing the truth, and enjoy all Ordinances, as the Free-men of Christ; Men must not separate from a Church, though there be corruption in it, to gather into a new Church, which may be more pure, and in some respects more comfortable. And as though such corruptions should be imposed as terms of Communion, yet if not actually imposed upon us, *our communicating in the true part of God's Worship is never the worse for the said imposition, as long as we do not communicate in those corruptions,* as M^r Bradshaw doth argue: So though they should be imposed and be unavoidable to all that are in Communion, that is not a sufficient reason for a total separation, as it is also own'd; for saith one, *When the corruptions of a Church are such as that one cannot communicate with her without sin unavoidably, that seems to me to be a just ground, though not of a positive yet of a negative, though not of a total yet of a partial separation; it may be a just ground for the lesser, but is not so for the greater.*

Supposing then the corruptions in a Church not to be of an heinous nature, not respecting the Fundamentals of Religion; supposing again they are not necessarily

necessarily imposed and unavoidable, then Separation for the sake of such is unwarrantable. But to make this the more uncontrollably evident, I shall consider the Corruptions as they respect Worship, or Discipline. In Worship, I shall consider the defects of it, in it self, in the Ministration, the Ministers and those that joyn with it, and shew that these do not disoblige from Communion in it, and attendance upon it.

§. I.

1. The defects of Worship, if not essential, are consistent with Communion, and no just reason for withdrawing from it. This the Brownists did acknowledge with some qualification, "Neither count

Apol p. 7.

"we it lawful for any member to forsake the Fellowship of the Church, for blemishes and imperfecti-

"ons, which every one, according to his Calling, "should studiously seek to cure, &c. So Mr Cotton,

Expos. on 1
Epist. Joh. p.
157.

Suppose there were and are sundry abuses in the Church, yet it was no safe ground of Separation. When the Sons

of Eli corrupted the Sacrifices of God, their sin was great, yet it was the sin of the people to separate and abhor. Thus a Reverend Person in his Farewel Sermon

England's Remembrancer,
Serm. 2. p. 38.

doth rightly instruct his Auditors, "A means to hold "fast what you have received, is diligent attendance

"on the publick Ordinances and Worship of God, if "and when you can enjoy them in any measure ac-

"cording to God's Will, though not altogether in "the manner you desire, and they should be admi-

"nistrated in, &c. Though I dare not advise you to "join in any thing that is in it self, or in your judg-

"ment evil, till you be satisfied about it; yet I must "advise you to take heed of Separation from the

"Church, or from what is good, and God's own "Ordinance, &c. For the fuller proof of which, it

may not be amiss to produce the several Arguments used by them in confirmation of this Truth. As,

First,

Arg. 1. *First*, To break off Communion, or to refuse it

Confession of
Faith, Art. 35.

for such defects, would be to look after a greater perfection than this present state will admit of. So the Brownists do declare, *None is to separate from a Church rightly gathered and established for faults and corruptions which may, and, so long as the Church consisteth of mortal men, will fall out and arise among them.* And Mr

Comment on
Jude, ver. 19.

Jenkin argues upon this Principle, "Must not he who will forbear Communion with a Church till it be altogether freed from mixtures, tarry till the day of Judgment, till when we have no promise that Christ will gather out of his Church whatsoever doth offend? This was it that amongst other reasons conquer'd the prejudices of that Good Man Mr J.

His Life, p. 111.

Allen, and kept him from Separation, of which we have this Account, "He knew of how great moment it was that the publick Worship of God should be maintained, and that its Assemblies should not be relinquish'd, though some of its Administrations did not clearly approve themselves unto him; because upon the account of some imperfections and pollutions in them, supposed or real, to withdraw Communion, is evidently to suppose our selves join'd before our time to the heavenly Assembly, or to have found such an one upon Earth exempt from all mixtures and imperfections of Worshippers and Worship. The want of this prudent consideration makes many to expect more than can be expected, and to look upon every defect or corruption as intolerable; to prevent which therefore Mr Baxter doth give this Advice to his Brethren, *Teach them to know that all men are imperfect and faulty, and so is all mens Worship of God; and that he that will not communicate with faulty Worship must renounce Communion with all the World, and all with him.*

Sacrileg. Desert. p. 96.

Secondly,

Secondly, They argue, our Saviour and the Apostles *Arg. 2.*
 did not separate from defective Churches and Worship, but communicated in it notwithstanding the corruptions, and therefore its not unlawful for others so to do. *No doubt it was written for our instruction,* saith a Reverend Person, our Lord Jesus Christ (who *Englands Remembrancer,*
was as zealous for purity in God's Worship, as much against corrupt mixtures of mens inventions therein as any can pretend to be) used to attend on the publick *Serm. 4. p. 94,*
Worship in his time, notwithstanding the many corruptions brought into it. That he went into their Assemblies not to joyn in any Worship, but only to bear witness against their corruptions, is no where written; but rather the contrary is held forth in Scripture, when he acknowledgeth himself a member of the Church of the Jews, approves of and justifies their Worship, as right for substance, that salvation might be attained therein, which he denies to be attainable in any other Worship,
John 4. 22. we know (including himself amongst those that worshipped God aright) what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. This is sufficiently proved by many^a, that Christ did communicate with the Jewish Church, and is granted as well by those of the Congregational as^b Presbyterial way: And yet Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship were much corrupted, of which Mr *Hilder sham* doth give a specimen^c, but especially Dr *Bryan*^d; "There were many great corruptions in the Church of the Jews in Christ's time, the Priests and Teachers were ignorant and wicked, and had a corrupt and unlawful entrance into their calling; and the People were like to the Priest, generally notoriously and obstinately ungodly; and the Worship used in that Church was wofully corrupt, many superstitious Ceremonies, the observation whereof were more strictly
 E urged,

Englands Remembrancer,
 Serm. 4. p. 94,
 95.

^a Ball's Tryal,
 p. 132.

^b The platform
 of Discipline in
 New England,
 c. 14. §. 8.

^c Lect. 35. on
 John, p. 165,
 166.

^d Dwelling with
 God, p. 294.

"urged, than the Commandments and Ordina-
 "nces of God, the Temple made a Den of
 "Thieves, the Discipline and censures shamefully ab-
 "used, the Doctrine was corrupt in many points;
 "yet the word tells you, Christ (whose example it
 "binds you to follow, and you profess your selves
 "followers of him in all imitable things) made no
 "separation from this Church, professed himself a
 "Member of it, was by Circumcision incorporated
 "a Member, received Baptism in a Congregation of
 "that People, was a hearer of their common Service
 "and their Teachers, allowing and commanding his
 "Disciples to hear them, communicated in the Pass-
 "over with the People and the Priest; no more did
 "his Apostles make separation from this Church af-
 "ter his Ascension, till their day had its Period, &c.
 "By their example it appears, that till God hath
 "forsaken a Church, no man may forsake it, &c.
 So that we may conclude from hence with Mr Hil-
 dersham, *Those Assemblies that enjoy the Word and Do-*
ctrine of Salvation, though they have many corruptions
remaining in them, are to be acknowledged as true Church-
es of God, and such as none of the faithful may make
Separation from. We shall need no further proof of
this Doctrine than the example of our Saviour himself,
 &c. For why should our Saviour use it if it was un-
 lawful; or why should it be a Sin in us, who have not
 such Eyes to pierce into the impiety of mans Traditions
 as he had, as Mr Bradshaw argues.

Ibid.

The Unrea-
 sonableness of
 Separation, p.
 104.

Non-Confor-
 mists no Schil-
 maticks, p. 15.

The same measures were observed also by the Apo-
 files after the establishment of the Christian Church;
 This is not to be gainsaid, and is therefore granted
 by one, in other things rigid more than enough; "I
 "do not say that every corruption in a true Church,
 "is sufficient ground of Separation from it: The
 "unsoundness

"unsoundness of many in the Church of *Corinth*,
 "touching the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and
 "in *Galatia* touching the Doctrine of Circumcision,
 "and the necessity of keeping the Ceremonial Law,
 "were not sufficient ground of Separation from them;
 "for the Apostles held Communion with them, not-
 "withstanding these corruptions. Now by parity
 of reason it will follow, that if Separation was not to
 be allowed from those corrupted Churches, then sure-
 ly not from such as are not so corrupted as they; So
 M^r *Cawdrey* pleads, *Corinth* had (we suppose) greater
disorders in it than are to be found (blessed be God) in
many of our Congregations; why then do they fly and
separate from us? And if our Saviour and his Apo-
 stles did not separate from such Churches, much less
 should we, who may without doubt safely follow
 the advice given by an Author above-quoted; *When*
you are at a stand think how Christ would have carried,
what he would have done in the like case with yours,
 and we may thereby be concluded.

Independ. a
 great Schism,
 P. 195.

Englands Re-
 membrancer,
 Sermon. 4. p. 111.

Thirdly, They further argue, that Christ doth *Arg. 3.*
 still hold Communion with defective Churches, and
 not reject the Worship for tolerable corruptions in
 it, and so neither ought we. It is supposed by a
 worthy person, that "there is no such society of
 "Christians in the World, whose Assemblies, as to
 "instituted Worship, are so rejected by Christ, as to
 "have a Bill of Divorce given unto them, until they
 "are utterly as it were extirpate by the Providence
 "of God, &c. For we do judge, that where-ever
 "the Name of Jesus Christ is called upon, there is
 "Salvation to be obtained; however the ways of it
 "may be obstructed unto the most by their own
 "sins and errors. And if this may be said of
 Churches, though fundamentally erroneous in Wor-
 ship,

Dr. Owen's dis-
 course of E-
 vang. Love,
 c. 3. p. 81.

Troughton's A-
pol. p. 110.

Lect. 35. on
John, p. 165.
166. and Lect.
82. p. 384.

V. Dr. Bryan's
dwelling with
God, p. 293.

+
* on the Sacra-
ment, p. 242.
Creston's hard
way to Heaven,
p. 36.
Noye's Tem-
ple measured,
p. 79.
Fenkin on Jude
v. 19.
Davenport's A-
pol. reply, p.
281.
Ball's Tryal, p.
159, &c.
† Com. on 1 E-
pist. John p.
156.

ship, then, *who shall dare, as another saith, to judge when Christ hath forsaken a People who still profess his Name, and keep up his Worship for substance according to his word, though they do or are supposed to fail in circumstances or lesser parts of duty?* Now, this granted, the other will follow, that then we are not to separate from such Churches. Thus Mr *Hildersham* concluded of old from the practice of Christ, and observes, 1. "So long as God continueth his word and the Doctrine of Salvation to a People, so long it is evident that God dwells among them, and hath not forsaken them, &c. And till God hath forsaken a Church, no man may forsake it. 2. No Separation may be made from those Assemblies, where men may be assured to find and attain Salvation, but men may be sure to find and attain Salvation in such Assemblies, where the Ministry of his word, and the Doctrine of Salvation is contained. So Mr *Vines**, *The Argument*, saith he, of Mr *Brightman* is considerable, if God afford his Communion with a Church by his own Ordinances, Grace and Spirit, it would be unnatural and peevish in a Child to forsake his Mother, while his Father owns her for his Wife. I might heap up Authorities of this kind, but shall content my self with a considerable one from Mr *Cotton*†, who reasons after this manner; "The practice of the Brownists is blame-worthy, because they separate where Christ keeps fellowship, *Rev.* 1. 18. And that he walks with us we argue, because he is still pleased to dispense to us the word of life, and edifies many Souls thereby, and therefore surely Christ hath fellowship with us; and shall man be more pure than his Maker? where Christ vouchsafes fellowship shall man renounce it?"

Upon this are grounded the wholesome exhortations

tions of many eminent Non-Conformists, as that of

M^r Calamy ; *You must hold Communion with all those*

Churches with which Christ holds Communion ; you must

separate from the sins of Christians, but not from the

Ordinances of Christ. Of M^r R. Allein ; Excommu-

nicate not them from you, excommunicate not your

selves from them with whom Christ holds Communion.

Judge not that Christ withdraws from all those who are

not in every thing of your mind and way. "Methinks,

saith a Reverend Person in his Farewel Sermon,

"where a Church as to the main, keeps the form of

"sound words, and the substantial of that Worship

"which is Christs, some adjudged defects in order

"cannot justifie separation. I dare not dismember

"my self from that Church that holds the head. I

"think whilst Doctrine is for the main sound, Christ

"stays with a Church ; and it is good staying where

"he stays : I would follow him and not lead him, or

"go before the Lamb. To such we find a severe

rebuke given very lately by a Reverend Person ;

Proud conceited Christians are not contented to come

out and separate from the unbelieving idolatrous World,

but they will separate also from the true Church of

Christ, and cast off all Communion with them who hold

Communion with him.

Fourthly, They argue, that to separate for such defects

and corruptions would destroy all Communion.

If this should be, saith M^r Bradshaw then no man can

present himself with a good Conscience, at any publick

Worship of God wheresoever ; because (except it should

be stinted and prescribed) he can have no assurance, but

that some errours in matter and form will be committed.

So M^r Ball ; "One man is of opinion, that a pre-

"scribed Form is better than another ; another that

"a prescribed Form is unlawful, &c. In these cases,

Godly Mans
Ark, Epist.
Ded.

Godly Mans
portion, p. 122.

V. Bains on
the Ephes. c. 2.
15. p. 297.
Englands Rem-
embrancer,
Serm. 16. p.
455.

Continuat. of
Morn. Exer.
Serm. 16. p.
459.

Arg. 4.

Unreaf. of the
Separat. p. 103.

Trial of the
grounds of Se-
parat. c. 2. p.
137, 138.

if

Sacrileg desert.
P. 95.

Defence of his
Cure, part 1.
P. 47.

" if the least error do stain the Prayers to others,
" that they may not lawfully joyn together, with
" whom shall the faithful joyn at all? Is not this to
" fill the Conscience with scruples, and the Church
" with rents? Such as these must, if they will be
true to their own Principles, renounce Communion
with all the World, and be like those that M^r Baxter
tell us he knows, *that never Communicate with any
Church, nor ever publickly hear, or pray, or Worship
God at all, because they think all your ways* [which he
directs to M^r Bagshaw and other Non-Conformists]
of Worship to be bad.

Iren. c. 23. P.
163.

With this there can be no continuance in any
Communion, so much M^r Burroughs doth maintain;
" There would be no continuance in Church-fellow-
" ship if this [a separation from a Church for cor-
" ruptions in it] were admitted; for what Church
" is so pure, and hath all things so comfortable, but
" within a while another Church will be more pure,
" and some things will be more comfortable there?
Upon the mischievous consequence of this did M^r
R. Allein ground his last advice to his Parishioners;
*Destroy not, saith he, all Communion by seeking after
a purer Church, than in this imperfect estate we shall
ever attain. According to this principle [no Commu-
nion at all, if not in all] where shall we rest? In all
society something will offend.*

Godly Mans
portion, p. 124.

Com. on Ephes.
c. 2. 15. p. 297.

With this, lastly, there can be no Order, Union,
or Peace in the Church; so M^r Bains, a Person of
great experience; *This* [seeking the Peace of Zion]
*reproveth such as make a secession or departure from
the Church of God, our visible Assemblies, either upon
dislike of some disorders in administration Ecclesiastical,
or disallowed Forms, and manner of procuring things,
which the Communion of Saints for full complement
and*

and perfection requireth. This is not, in my conceit, so much to reform as to deform, to massacre the Body and divide the Head, &c. and will end in the dissolution of all Church-Communion (if it be followed)

as is notoriously evident in the case of Mr R. Williams of New-England, that for the sake of greater purity separated so long, that he owned no Church nor Ordinances of God in the World ; and at his motion, the people that were in Communion with him dissolved themselves, as we have the account from thence. This therefore is one of the Doctrines we are to avoid, according to the prudent advice in a Book above-cited ; " Doctrines crying up purity to the ruine of unity, reject ; for the Gospel calls for unity as well as purity.

Morton's Memorial, p. 78.
 &c.

Mr. Baxter's Def. of Cure, part 2. p. 171.

Englands Remembrancer, Ser. 14. p. 371.

Fifthly. They argue, that to separate upon such an account is not at all warranted in Scripture. Thus Mr *Cawdrey* ; " It is no duty of Christs imposing, no privilege of his purchasing, either to deprive a mans self of his Ordinances for other mens sins, or to set up a new Church in opposition to a true Church, as no Church rightly constituted, for want of some reformation in lighter matters. Saith Mr. *Blake*, *We read not of Separation in this way* [for the sake of abuses and corruptions] *approved, nor any presidents to go before us in it ; we read a heavy brand laid upon it, Jude 19. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit.* So the Congregations in New-England declare ; " The faithful in the Church of Corinth, wherein were many unworthy persons and practices, are never commanded to absent themselves from the Sacrament because of the same ; therefore the godly in like causes are not presently to separate. It should rather have been infer'd, are not to separate, for so much must be con-

Arg. 5.

Independ. a Schism, p. 192.

Vindicie sæd. c. 31. p. 228.

Platform of Discipline in New-England, c. 14, §. 8.

cluded.

Temple measured, p. 78.

Totodulia Anf. to Pref. §. 25. p. 48.

Confer. *Savoy*, p. 12, 13.
Mr. *Baxter's* Defence of the Cure, p. 34, 35.

Tryal of the grounds, &c. p. 308.

cluded from the premises, if any thing at all. This is accordingly infer'd by Mr. *Noyes*; *For Brethren to separate from Churches and Church-Ordinances, which are not fundamentally defective, neither in Doctrine or Manners, in Heresy or Prophaneness is contrary to the Doctrine and Practice both of Christ and his Apostles.* Unto whom I shall add the testimony of Mr. *Tombs*; "Separation from a Church somewhat erroneous or corrupt in Worship or Conversation, &c. is utterly dissonant from any of the rules or examples, which either of old the Prophets, or holy men, or Christ and his Apostles have prescribed, is for the most part the fault of Pride or bitter Zeal, and tends to strife and confusion and every evil work."

Arg. 6.

Sixthly, They argue, that there is no necessity for Separation for the sake of such corruptions, because a Person may Communicate in the Worship without partaking in those corruptions. It was the opinion of the Presbyterian Brethren at the *Savoy*-Conference, that not only the hearing, but the reading a defective Liturgy was lawful to him, that by violence is necessitated to offer up that or none. And if there was a possibility of thus separating the substance from the circumstantial defects in the Ministerial use of such Worship, much more may this be supposed to be done by those that only attend upon it, and are not obliged by any act of their own to give an explicate consent to all and every thing used in it. 1. This separation of the good from the bad in Divine Worship they grant possible. So Mr. *Ball*, *If some things humane be mixed with Divine, a sound Christian must separate the one from the other, and not cast away what is of God as a nullity, fruitless, unprofitable, defiled, because somewhat of men is annexed unto them.*

In

In the Body we can distinguish betwixt the substance and the sickness which cleaveth unto it ; betwixt the substance of a part or member, and some bunch or swelling, which is a deformity, but destroyeth not the nature of that part or member, &c. So M^r Calamy ; Its one thing

Door of Truth
opened, p. 7.

to keep our selves pure from pollution, another to gather Churches out of Churches. 2. They grant, that what is faulty and a sin in Worship is no sin to us, when we do not consent to it : So M^r Corbet ; “ My par-

Non-Conformists Plea, &c.
p. 6.

“ taking in any Divine Worship, which is holy and “ good for the matter, and allowable or passable in “ the mode for the main, doth not involve me in the “ blame of some sinful defects therein to which I consent not, and which I cannot redress. So another Reverend Person in his Farewel Sermon ; While all necessary fundamental Truth is publicly professed and maintained in a Church, is taught and held forth in publick Assemblies, and the corruptions there (though great yet) are not such as make the Worship cease to be Gods Worship, nor of necessity to be swallowed down, if one would communicate in that Worship, while any Christian (that is watchful over his own heart and carriage, as all ought ever to be) may partake in the one, without being active in or approving the other ; there God is yet present, there he may be spiritually worshipped, served acceptably, and really enjoyed. 3. They grant, that the being present at Divine Worship is no consent to the corruptions in it.

Englands Remembrancer,
Serm. 4. p. 94.

Thus M^r Robinson ; “ He that partakes with the “ Church in the upholding any evil, hath his part in “ the evil also. But I deny, as a most vain imagination, that every one that partakes with a Church “ in things lawful, joyns with it in upholding the “ things unlawful to be found in it. Christ our “ Lord joyned with the Jewish Church in things “ lawful, and yet upheld nothing unlawful in it.

Lawfulness of
hearing, &c.
p. 19, 23.

Case of great
and present
use, p. 16. 18.
Cure dir. 35.
p. 196, &c.
Defence, p. 96.

Letter of Mi-
nisters in Old
England to the
Brethren in
New England,
p. 12, 13, 16.

Cure, p. 200.

So Mr Nye; *Approbation is an act of the mind, it is not shewed until it be expressed outwardly by my words and gestures.* This Mr Baxter undertakes to prove by several Arguments, as that no man can in reason and justice take that for my profession, which I never made by word or deed. That the profession made by Church-Communion is totally distinct from this. That this opinion would make it unlawful to joyn with any Pastor of Church on Earth, since every one mixeth Sin with their Prayers. 4. They say, that corruptions, though foreknown, do not yet make those that are present guilty of them. Thus the old Non-Conformists declare; "It is all one to the People, whether the fault be personal (as some distinguish) or otherwise known before-hand, or not known: For if simple presence defile, whether it was known before-hand or not, all presence is faulty. And if simple presence defile not, our presence is not condemned, by reason of the corruptions known, whereof we stand not guilty. If the error be such as may be tolerated, and I am called to be present, by such fault I am not defiled though known before. Mr Baxter replys to those of a contrary opinion after this manner; *Take heed that thus [by affirming that foreknowing faults in Worship makes them ours] you make not God the greatest sinner and the worst Being in all the World. For God foreknoweth all mens sins, and is present when they commit them, and he hath Communion with all the Prayers of the faithful in the World; what faults soever be in the words or forms, he doth not reject them for any such failings. Will you say therefore that God approveth or consenteth to all these sins? I know beforehand that every man will sin that prayeth (by defect of desire, &c.) But how doth all this make it mine, &c.*

And

And he otherwhere adds; *It is another mans fault or error that you foreknow, and not your own.* 5. Its granted that the fault of another in the ministration of Divine Worship is none of ours, nor a sufficient reason to absent from it, or to deprive our selves of it. Thus Mr Baxter; "The wording of the publick Prayers is the Pastors work and none of mine, &c. And why should any hold me guilty of another mans fault, which I neither can help, nor be longeth to any office of mine to help any farther than to admonish him. And that the faults of him that Ministers are no sufficient reason to debar our selves of Communion in the worship. Mr. Nye affirms and proves by this Argument; *If I may not omit a duty in respect to the evil mixed with it, which is my own, much less may I thus leave an ordinance for the evil that is another mans, no way mine, or to be charged upon me, This were to make another mans sins or infirmities more mine than my own.* Thus is the case resolved with respect to the Cross in Baptism; "I may not only, faith one, do that which I judge to be inconvenient, but suffer another to do that which I judge to be unlawful, rather than be deprived of a necessary ordinance, e. g. If either I must have my Child baptized with the sign of the Cross, or not baptized at all; I may suffer it to be done in that way, though I judge it an unlawful addition, because the manner concerns him that doth it, not me (at least not so much) so long as there is all the essence. He must be responsible for every irregularity, not I. Thus Jacob took Laban's Oath though by his Idols, &c. After the same manner doth Mr. Baxter resolve the case in his Christian Directory, p. 49.

Seventhly, They grant, that it is a duty to joyn with a defective and faulty Worship where we

Christian Directory, p. 748.

Cure, p. 197.
V. Jerubbaal justified, p. 16,
&c. 22, 34.

Case of great and present use, p. 10.

Of Scandal a discourse, p. 65.

V. Crofton's reformat. no separat. p. 24.

Arg. 7.

can have no better. Thus the Presbyterian Brethren

Confer. at Sa- at the *Savoy*; "An inconvenient mode of Worship
 109, p. 3, 12, 13. is a sin in the Imposer, and in the chuser and vo-

"luntary user, that may offer God better and will
 "not: And yet it may not be only lawful, but
 "a duty to him, that by violence is necessitated to

Separat. yet no
 Schism, p. 64.

"offer up that or none. This is acknowledged by
 an Author that is far from being favourable to Com-
 munion with the Church; *If the word of God could*
be no where heard, or Communion in Sacraments no
where enjoyed, but only in such Churches that were
so corrupt as yours is conceived to be; it might be law-
ful, yea and a duty to joyn with you so far as possibly

Def. of Cure,
 part 1. p. 78.

Christians could without sin. Accordingly Mr. Baxter
 declares, that it is a duty to hold Communion
 constantly with any of the Parish Churches a-
 mongst us, that have honest competent Pastors when
 we can have no better, and professeth for his own

part 2. p. 176.
 and Cure p.
 265. q. 6.

part; *Were I, saith he, in Armenia, Abassia, or a-*
mong the Greeks, I would joyn in a much more defective
Form than our Liturgy rather than none. And he adds,
That this is the judgment of many New England Mi-
nisters (to joyn with the English Liturgy rather than
have no Church Worship) I have reason to conjecture

Defence of Sy-
 nod. Pref. p.
 4, 5.
 Def. of Cure,
 part 1. p. 78.
 n. 6. p. 96. n. 5.

from the defence of the Synod, &c. Now in what cases
 this is to be presumed, that we can have no better,
 he shews, 1. When it is so by a necessity arising from
 Divine Providence. 2. A necessity proceeding from
 humane Laws which forbid it. 3. A necessity from
 the injury done to the publick. And 4. When it is
 to our own greater hinderance than help, as when
 we must use none or do worse. In these and the
 like cases it becomes a duty, and what is otherwise
 lawful, is thereby made necessary. And he that can-
 not joyn with a purer Worship, than what is pub-
 lickly

lickly established without the breach of humane Laws, or the disturbance of the publick Peace, or dividing the Church of God, or the bringing danger upon himself, is as much, where any of these or the like reasons are, restrained from so doing, as if it did proceed from a natural or providential necessity, that is, the one he cannot do Physically and naturally, the other he cannot do morally, honestly, and prudently. Having thus far stated the case, and shew'd that its universally owned by those that dissent from the Church of *England*, that Communion in a Worship not essentially defective and corrupted is lawful; and that its a received opinion, that where better is not to be had, its a duty; and that better is not to be had, where it is not to be had lawfully. I might freely pass on, but because there is a common objection against what has been said, taken from *Malac. 1. 14. Cursed be the deceiver, &c. that voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing*; I shall briefly return their answer to it and proceed. To this the old Non-Conformists reply; 1. "No Argument can be brought from this place to the purpose, but by analogy, which is a kind of arguing of all other most ready at hand, but liable to most exceptions, and apt to draw aside, if care be not had (which in this case we find not) to take the proportion in every material point just and true. 2. The corrupt sacrifice is that which the deceiver bringeth voluntarily and out of neglect, having a male in his flock, but the faithful bringeth himself and his godly desires according to the will of God; and as for corruptions whether respecting matter or form, they are none of his, they cleave not to his sacrifice to stain or pollute it, &c. 3. He offers not a corrupt thing who offers the best he hath. 4. *It is*

Letter of the
Minist. in *Old
Engl.* to those
in *New Engl.* p.
14.

Ball's Tryal of
the grounds,
p. 74.

Tryal of the
grounds, &c.
c. 4. p. 78.

Def. of Cure,
p. 85.

V. Barrough's
Iren. c. 12. p.
86.

to be considered, saith Mr Ball, that what is simply best, is not best in relation to this or that circumstance or end; what is best in a time free is not best in a time not free. It is granted, saith Mr Baxter, that we must offer God the best that we can do, but not the best which we cannot do. And many things must concur (and especially a respect to the publick good) to know which is the best. So that before this Text can be opposed to what has been said, it must be proved,
1. That the things in question are corruptions as much prohibited as the blind and lame under the Law. 2. That they are such as a person doth chuse, and it is in his power to help, and offers it when he hath a male in his flock. 3. That such a corruption as affects not the substance of Worship, doth yet alter the nature of it, and makes the whole to be a corrupt thing, and abominable to God. If these things are not, the objection reacheth not the case, and there is no ground from that place for this objection.

platform of Di-
scipline, c. 13.
§. 5.

I shall conclude this head with a remarkable saying of the Ministers of *New England*; "To separate from a Church for some evil only conceived, or indeed in the Church, which might and should be tolerated and healed with a spirit of meekness, and of which the Church is not yet convinced, though perhaps himself be, for this or the like reasons to withdraw from publick Communion in word, seals, or censures, is unlawful and sinful.

But supposing it may be unlawful to separate from a Church for a defective and faulty Worship; yet it may be supposed, that it may be lawful when it is for better edification, and that we may chuse what is for our edification before what is not, and what is more for our edification before what is less. For the deci-
sion

sion of which case I shall shew from them,

2. That as defects and faults in worship, so neither is the pretence of better edification a sufficient reason against Communion with a Church. Sometimes they say it is no better than a mere pretence and imaginary, *a seeming contentment of mind*, as one calls it.

Methermeneut.

This Mr Hildersham takes notice of; *Some prefer others before their own Pastor, only because they shew more zeal in their voice and gesture, and phrase of speech and manuer of delivery, though happily the Doctrine it self be nothing so wholesome or powerful, or fit to edify their Consciences, as the Doctrine of their own Pastor is*, of such he saith, *we may wish them more knowledge and judgment.* Mr Baxter observes the same,

p. 71.

On John 4.

Lect. 58.

“One thinks that this is the best way, and another

Cure of Divis.

p. 359.

“that the other is best--- And commonly appear-

“ance, and a taking tone and voice do more with

“them than solid evidence of truth. Therefore its

fit to have a right notion of edification, which, saith a Reverend Person, *lies more in the informing of our judgments, and confirming our resolutions, than in the gusts and relishes of affection.* These, as he saith, are indeed of great use to the other, but without them are far from making a Person better, and leaving him truly edified. Again, it may be, and 'tis no better than a mere pretence, when the fault is in themselves that complain they do not edifie. Mr Hildersham charges it upon such; *Thou mightest receive profit (if the fault be not in thy self) by the meanest of us that preach.* And he thus freely again declares himself;

Continuar. of

Morn. Excr.

Serm. 4. p. 95.

I am perswaded, there is never a Minister that is of the most excellent gifts (if he have a Godly heart) but he can truly say, he never heard any faithful Minister in his life that was so mean, but he could discern some gift in him that was wanting in himself, and could receive

Lect. 28. p.

129. and Lect.

58.

some

some profit by him. And therefore they advise to cure the fault before they make use of this plea. So the pious Person above-said argues; *How shouldest thou profit by his Ministry, if thou come with prejudice, without any reverence or delight unto it, nor dost scarce* acknowledge Gods Ordinance in it? So Mr Jenkin directs; "Labour for experimental benefit by the Ordinances. Men separate to those Churches which they account better, because they never found those where they were before (to them) good--- Find the setting up Christ in your hearts by the Ministry, and then you will not dare to account it Antichristian. Thus a Reverend Person in his Farewel Sermon, speaking of supposed defects in the Church, doth advise his Auditors; *Enlarge your care and pains in your preparations; a right stomach makes good nourishment of an indifferent meal; you may be warm (though in a colder air and room than you have formerly been) if you will put on more cloths before you come: Watch your hearts more narrowly, and speak things to your hearts more than you have done, Eccles. 10. 10 if the iron be blunt, then must he put to more strength.*

Com. on Jude,
v. 19.

Englands Remembrancer,
Serm. 16. p.
456.

Iren. c. 12. p.
85.

Platform, c. 13.
§. 5.

But supposing it be really for edification, yet this they declare is no sufficient reason for Separation. So Mr Burroughs; "If you be joyned to a Pastor, so as you believe he is set over you by Christ, to be a Pastor to you; though this man hath meaner gifts than others; and it would be more comfortable for you to have another Pastor, yet this is not enough to cause you to desert him whom Christ hath set over you. And so the Ministers in New England deliver their minds; *To separate from a Church for greater enlargements, with just grief to the Church, is unlawful and sinful.* So when this Question was put,

put, *Are they not at all times obliged to use the means which are most edifying?* Its answered by a Reverend Person, *They may say at all times, when they have nothing to outweigh their own edification.* So that edification may be outweighed, and then it can be no standing and sufficient reason. So Mr *Burroughs* declares in this case; "Men must consider not only what the thing is in its own nature, but what it is to them, how it stands in reference to their relations---- It is not enough to say the thing is in it self better, but is it better in all the references I have and it hath? Is it better in regard of others, in regard of the publick, for the helping me in all my relations? may it not help one way and hinder many ways? Of the same opinion is Mr *Baxter*; *Many things*, saith he, *must concur (and especially a respect to the publick good) to know which is the best.* So that edification is not to be judged of alone, our own improvement is not to determine us in our actions, and especially not with respect to Church-Communion, for then other reasons do give Law to it and over-rule it. This we see those that dissent from the Church in other things agree with her in: And they give several reasons and arguments for it.

Continuat. of
Morn. Exer.
Serm. 4. p. 91.

Iren. c. 12. p.
85, 86.

Defence, part
1. p. 85,

First, If we were sure we could not profit, yet we must come to do homage to God, and shew reverence to his Ordinance. This is Mr *Hildersham's* opinion. Arg. 1.

Left. 28. p.
129, & 309.

Secondly, The leaving a Church for better edification, is built upon a false and dangerous principle, which is that we must always chuse the best. So Mr *Burroughs*; *To hold what in its self best must be chosen and done, not weighing circumstances or references is a dividing principle.* And afterward he saith, *a Christian without comparing one thing with another,* Arg. 2.

Iren. c. 12. p.
84, 87.

will hack and hew, and disturb himself and others in the ways of Religion. I believe some of you have known those who, whatsoever they have conceived to be better than other, they have presently followed with all eagerness, never considering circumstances, references or consequences, but the thing is good, it must be done; yet being wearied with this they have after grown loose, in as great an excess the other way.

Of this V. Ball's
Tryal, c. 4. p.
75, 76, 78.

Arg. 3.
Lect. 66.

Arraignment
of Schism, p.
48.

Iren. c. 12. p.
85.

Platform Pref.
p. 7. and c. 13.
S. 1.
Independ. a
Schism, p. 50.

Thirdly, This principle of better edification if followed, would bring in confusion. So Mr Hildersham; This factious disposition of the hearers of Gods Word, hath in all ages been the cause of much confusion in the Church of God, and greatly hindred the fruit of the Gospel of Christ. "This, saith Mr Brinsley, the "moderate Author of the late Irenicum [Mr Burroughs] will by no means allow, but condemns "as the direct way to bring in all kind of disorder "and confusion into the Church; and I think "none who are judicious, but will therein subscribe to him. It will not be amiss to transcribe his own words; It is in it self a better thing to enjoy a Ministry of the most eminent gifts and graces than one of lower; but if this should be made a rule, that a man who is under a Pastor who is faithful, and in some good measure gifted, upon another mans coming into the Country that is more eminent, he should forsake his Pastor and join to the other; and if after this, still a more eminent man comes, he should leave the former and join to him; and by the same Law a Pastor who hath a good People, yet if others be more likely to receive more good, he may leave his own People and go to them, what confusion and disorder would there be continually in the Church; This is condemned also by the New England Ministers. This Mr Cawdrey doth expose; "If a man may lawfully separate

“parate from a true Church, &c. only with a good
 “mind to serve God in Church-institutions, true or
 “conceited by his own light, all the Sectaries and Se-
 “parists, Donatists, Brownists in the World may be
 “justified. *This, saith another, speaking of hearing* Metherneneut,
for this reason, is a Church-destroying Principle; sure P. 72, 74.
if one member be not fixed, then not another, nor ano-
ther, &c. and then not the Pastor, nor Teacher, and so
farewel Churches.

Fourthly, This will be endless : So Mr Burroughs ; *Arg. 4.*
 “Men must not separate from a Church, though *Iren. c. 23. p.*
 “there be corruptions in it, to gather into a new *163.*
 “Church which may be more pure, and in some re-
 “pects more comfortable. First, Because we never
 “find the Saints in Scripture separating or raising
 “Churches in such a case. And Secondly, There
 “would be no continuance in Church-fellowship if
 “this were admitted ; for what Church is so pure,
 “and hath all things so comfortable, but within a
 “while another Church will be more pure, and
 “some things will be more comfortable there ? And
 he concludes with this prudent maxim ; *The general*
peace of the Church should be more regarded than some
comfortable accommodations to our selves. So Mr Bax- Defence, part
ter ; What if twenty Ministers be one abler than ano- 1. p. 85.
ther in their several degrees, doth it follow that only
the ablest of all these may be joyned with, because that
all the rest do worse ? And yet this must be, if edifica-
tion be always to be consulted, and is to determine
us in our choice of Ministers, Churches, and Ordi-
nances.

Fifthly, They say, edification doth not depend so *Arg. 5.*
 much upon the external administration of Worship,
 as Gods Blessing, and that we are not to break the
 Order, Peace and Union of the Church for the sake

Lect. 54. p.
254, & Lect.
58.

On the Sacra-
ment, p. 246.

In his Farewel
Sermon.

Serm. at Pauls
on Acts 9. 31.

of it. The former is asserted by Mr *Hildersham*;
 "Its our sin and shame, and is just cause of hum-
 "bling to us, if we cannot profit by the meanest Mi-
 "nister God hath sent. The power of the Ministry
 "dependeth not on the excellency of the Teachers
 "gift, but Gods blessing. The latter is maintained
 by Mr *Vines*; *Its said, order in an Army kills no Bo-*
dy, yet without it the Army is but a rout, neither able
to offend or defend: So haply order in the Church con-
verts no body, yet without it I see not how the Church
can attain her end, or preserve themselves in begetting
or breeding up Souls to God. Therefore is the advice
 of Mr. *Baxter*; "Do not think to prosper by break-
 "ing over the hedge, under pretence of any right of
 "Holiness [so of edification] whatsoever, following
 "any party that would draw you to Separation. The
 mischief of which is represented by Dr. *Tuckney*;
Experience, saith he, hath taught us that the Church
of God hath been poorly edified by those who have
daubed up their Babel with untempered mortar, &c.
when the Church is rent by Schisms and Factions,
and one Congregation is turned into many Conventicles,
falsely now called Churches, this doth diminish, weaken,
and ruine.

Lastly, When they do grant that edification may
 serve to guide us, and that we may hear where we
 can most profit, its with such limitations and cauti-
 ons as these; it must be *seldom, in a great case, with-*
out offence and contempt. Thus Mr. *Hildersham*; "I
 "dare not condemn such Christians, as having Pa-
 "stors in the places where they live of meaner gifts,
 "do desire (so they do it without open breach or
 "contempt of the Churches order) to enjoy the Mini-
 "stry of such as have better gifts, &c. so they do it
 "without contempt of their own Pastors, and without
 "scandal

Lect. 54. p.
253.

“scandal and offence to them and their People. So again; *You ought not to leave your own Pastor at any time with contempt of his Ministry, as when you say or think, alas! he is no body; a good honest man, but he hath no gifts, I cannot profit by him.* And as if he could not be too cautious in the case, he lays down this as the Character of one that doth this innocently; *He only makes right use of the benefit of hearing such as have more excellent gifts than his own Pastors, and learns thereby to like his own Pastor the better, and to profit more by him.* That this is to be but seldom, we have the concurrent testimony of the Provincial Assembly of London, who upon this Question; *Would you have a man keep constantly to the Minister under whom he lives?* do answer, *We are not so rigid as to tie up People from hearing other Ministers occasionally, even upon the Lords Day.* But yet we believe 'tis most agreeable to Gospel order upon the grounds forementioned. Thus it is resolved also by one of a more rigid way, who puts this Question; *Whether members of particular Churches may hear indifferently elsewhere?* and returns this answer; “God will have mercy and not sacrifice, as distance of habitation, handling such a point. “But most certainly members of Churches ought “mostly to be with their own Churches--- The imagined content in hearing others, is rather a temptation than motion of the Spirit.

Left. 58.

Jus Divinum
Minist. Evan-
gel. p. 11, 12.Metherneneurs.
p. 72.

From all which we may conclude, that the presence of better edification is no sufficient reason for Separation from a Church, Worship, or Ministry, without there be other reasons that do accompany it; and then it is not for this reason so much as those it is in conjunction with.

But admitting this, yet it will hardly be granted to be a reason for Separation from the Church of England,

Left. 29. p.
131.

+

Left. 28. p.
129.

Letter of the
Minist. in Old
England to the
Brethren in
New England,
P. 13.
Case of great
vic, p. 3.

Page 25,

England, if the testimony of many worthy persons be of any consideration. Thus Mr *Hildersham* declares, when he is reprovng such as make no conscience to come to the beginning of Gods publick Worship, and to stay to the end of it; he thus proceeds, "Because I see many of them that have most knowledge, and are forwardest professors offend in this way, I will manifest the sin of these men. 1. They sin against themselves in the profit they might receive by the Worship of God--- There is no part of Gods service, (not the Confession, not the Prayers, not the Psalm, not the Blessing) but it concerns every one, and every one may receive edification by it. This he otherwhere repeats and saith, "By the Confession, and all other Prayers used in the Congregation, a man may receive more profit than by many other. Of this opinion, as to the most of the Prayers in our Liturgy, were the old Non-Conformists; *We are perswaded, that not only some few select Prayers, but many Prayers and other exhortations may lawfully be used, with fruit and edification to Gods People.*

As for the word preach'd amongst us, Mr *Nye* saith, that "there is a summ of doctrinal truths, which in the enlargement and application, are sufficient both for conversion and edification, to which the Preachers are to assent. And that "the word of God interpreted and applyed by preaching in this way, "is a choice mercy and gift wherewith God hath blessed this Nation for many Years, to the conversion and edification of many thousands. And he afterwards ascribes the want of edification to the prejudices of People. *Such reasonings, saith he, against bearing, though they convince not the unlawfulness of it, yet they leave such prejudices in the minds of them which*

which are tender, as perplex and render hearing less profitable and edifying, even to those that are persuaded of its lawfulness. This Mr Tombs declares himself freely in; "If we look to experience of former times, there is now ground to expect a blessing from conforming Preachers, as well, or rather more, than from Preachers of the separated Churches. Sure the conversion, consolation, strengthening, establishing of Souls in the truth, has been more in England from Preachers, who were Enemies to Separation, whether Non-Conformist to Ceremonies or Conformists, Presbyterial or Episcopal, even from Bishops themselves, than from the best of the Separatists. I think all that are acquainted with the History of things in the last age, will acknowledge that more good hath been to the Souls of men, by the Preaching of *Usher, Potter, Abbot, Jewel*, and some other Bishops; by *Preston, Sibbs, Taylor, Whately, Hilderham, Ball, Perkins, Dod, Stock*, and many thousands, Adversaries to the separated Churches, than ever was done by *Ainsworth, Johnson, Robinson*, rigid Separatists, or *Cotton, Thoburn, Hooker*, and others (though men of precious memory) promoters of the way of the Churches Congregational. And therefore if the Bishops and conforming Preachers now apply themselves (as we hope when the heat of contention is more allayed, they will) to the profitable way of preaching against Popery and Prophaneness, exciting Auditors to the life of faith in Christ, &c. there may be as good ground, if not better (considering how much the Spirits of Separatists are for their party, and the speaking of the truth in love, and edifying in love, is necessary to the growth of the Body, Eph. 4. 15.) to expect by them a blessing in promoting
 " the

*Theodulius, c. 9.
 s. 8. p. 317.*



“ the power of Godliness, than from the Separatists. So that whether we consider the Worship or Doctrine, or the preaching of it, the Church of *England* in their apprehension doth not want a sufficiency of means for the conversion and edification of Souls: And consequently the argument taken from edification, in justification of forsaking the Communion of it, is inconclusive and of no force. But this branch of it will be further confirm'd under the third general.

But however, this will not be so easily quitted, for supposing the Doctrine good, and those that teach it capable (as far as learning and parts are requisite) to improve it to the conversion and edification of others; yet if they themselves are loose and scandalous, it may give just offence, and be thought a sufficient cause to separate from the Worship in which such do officiate.

3. Therefore I shall shew, that the badness of the Ministers is of it self no sufficient reason to forsake the Communion of a Church, or to separate from the Worship administred in it. What holy Mr Rogers saith is a great truth; “ It is not to be denied, “ but that the example of ignorant and unreformed, “ especially notorious Persons in the Ministry, hath “ done and doth much harm; and if either they “ cannot be convicted, or if their crimes be such as “ cannot remove them out of their places, there is “ just cause of grief that such should have any “ thing to do in Gods matters, which are so weighty “ and to be dealt withal in high reverence.

But yet before the objection is admitted, it is to be premised, 1. That if there be such in the Church, it doth not proceed from their Conformity to it. For good and pious men of this sort always were and still

still are in the Church. What there were formerly may be read in M^r Baxter, who thus delivers himself; "When I think what learned, holy, incomparable men, abundance of the old Conformists were, my heart riseth against the thoughts of separating from them; such as M^r Bolton, M^r Whately, M^r Fenner, &c. and abundance other such; yea such as Bishop Jewel, Bishop Grindal, Bishop Hall, &c. yea and the Martyrs too, as Cranmer, Ridley, Hooker himself, &c. What there are now in the Church, he also tells us; *I believe there are many hundred Godly Ministers in the Parish-Churches of England.* And of his own knowledge, saith, *I profess to know those of them, whom I take to be much better than my self; I will say a greater word, that I know those of them whom I think as Godly and humble Ministers, as most of the Non-Conformists whom I know.* So saith D^r Bryan; "In some Countries I am sure there are many Sober, Godly, Orthodox, able Preachers yet in possession of the publick places.

Defence, part
1. P. 57.

Ibid. p. 12.

Ibid. p. 11.

Dwelling with
God, Sermon. 6.
p. 313.

2. It is to be premised, that this argument, if of any, yet is of no farther force than against the Congregations where such are, and so is of none against the Church it self where are good as well as bad, nor against Parochial Communion where such are not. So M^r Baxter argues; *I doubt not but there are many hundred Parish Ministers, who preach holily, and live holily, though I could wish that they were more. And what reason have you to charge any other mens sins on them, &c.* or to think it unlawful to joyn with the good for the sake of the bad? this is to condemn the sound for the sake of the infected.

Defence, part
1. P. 11.

Having premised this, we shall re-assume the case, and consider how it is stated and resolved by them.

1. Its granted, that it is not unlawful to joyn with

H

bad

Tract. 3. p.
223.

bad Ministers in some cases where they may have better. So Mr Rogers ; *As it is far from me to be a Patron of such, or to justify them ; so yet, while we may enjoy the Ministry of better, I would not refuse to be partaker of the Prayers which are offered by them.*

Ibid.

Cure Dir. 17.
P. 114.

2. Its granted, that its lawful and a duty to hear and joyn with such where a better cannot be had ; that it is lawful, so Mr Rogers ; *Who can blame him, who desireth to pray with better than they be ? And yet better to joyn with them sometime, than to leave the publick Assemblies altogether.* So Mr Baxter ; “ No

Letter of the
Minist. in Old
England to the
Brethren in
New England,
P. 11.

“ People should chuse and prefer an ungodly Minister before a better ; but they should rather submit “ to such than have none, when a better by them “ cannot be had. That its a duty, so the old Non-Conformists ; *The Scripture teacheth evidently, that the People must and ought to joyn with them [unworthy Ministers] in the Worship of God, and in separating from the Ordinance they shall sin against God. For the Worship is of God, and the Ministry is of God ; the Person unworthily executing his place, is neither set up by some few private Christians, nor can by them be removed : And warrant to withdraw themselves from the Worship of God, because such as ought not, are suffered to intermeddle with holy things, they have none from God.* So Mr Ball ; “ To communicate with “ Ministers no better than Pharisees in the true Worship of God, is to worship God aright, to reverence his Ordinances, to relye upon his Grace, to “ hearken unto his voice, and submit unto his good “ pleasure. This they maintain by several arguments. As,

Tryal of the
grounds, c. 13
p. 311.
V. Tombs.
Theoduliz, p.
17.

Arg. I.

First, Such were always in the Church, and Communion must never have been held with the Church, if no Communion was to be where such were. So the old

old Non-Conformists argue ; " If the Minister make
 " it unlawful, then all Communion in any part of
 " Gods Worship with such Ministers is unlawful,
 " and so the Church in all ages of the World, the
 " Prophets, our Saviour Christ, the Apostles, and
 " the faithful in the Primitive Churches sinned, in
 " holding Communion with such, when the Priests
 " were dumb Dogs that could not bark, and greedy
 " Dogs that could never have enough ; when the
 " Prophets prophesied lyes, when the Priests bought
 " and sold Doves in the Temple, &c. when they
 " were such and did such things, they were ungodly
 " Ministers ; but we never find that the Prophets,
 " our Saviour, and the Apostles, did either for-
 " bear themselves, or warn the faithful not to com-
 " municate with such in the Ordinance of Wor-
 " ship. So much Mr Nye doth grant ; *More cannot*
be objected against our Ministers that Conform, than
might against the Scribes and Pharisees in Christs time ;
either in respect of their Doctrine ; which was loaden
with Traditions ; their standing, which was not accord-
ing to Law ; their lives, which were vicious ; yet Christ
not only permits, but requires us to attend the truths
they deliver.

Letter of the
 Ministr. in *Old*
Engl. &c. p. 10.

V. Baileys Tryal,
 p. 310.

Case of great
 use, p. 14.

Secondly, They plead that our Saviour himself
 did Communicate where such did Officiate. So Dr
 Bryan ; *In some Countries, I am sure there are many So-*
ber, Godly, Orthodox, able Preachers, &c. And if you
know any Country where it is worse, consider if Christ
himself did not joyn with worse. This is attested by
 another Reverend Person ; " Our Saviour Christ u-
 " sed to attend on the publick Worship in his time,
 " notwithstanding such formalists and superstitious
 " ones, as the Scribes and Pharisees did officiate
 " in it.

Arg. 2.

Dwelling with
 God, p. 313.

Englands Re-
 membrancer,
 Sermon. 4. p. 94.

Arg. 3.

Christian Directory, p. 747.
& Cure, p.
113, 114.

Account given
to the Parli-
ment, p. 27.

Letter of the
Ministers, p. 11.

Tract 3. p. 223.

Thirdly, They say that the sin of the Minister is not theirs, nor doth bring any detriment to them, though they Communicate with him. So Mr Baxter; *A Ministers personal faults may damn himself, and must be matter of lamentation to the Church, who ought to do their best to reform them, or get better by any lawful means; but in case they cannot, his sin is none of theirs, nor doth it make his administration null or ineffectual, nor will it allow you to separate from the Worship which he administreth.* So the Ministers sent to Oxford do asserit; "Some evil men may and "always have *de facto* been Officers and Ministers in "the Church, &c. and the wickedness of such men did "not null or evacuate their Ministerial Acts, for our "Saviour would have the Scribes and Pharisees heard "while they sate in *Moses Chair*, &c. And that the Ministrations in such a case are not invalid, and that the People suffer not by it they further prove: 1. Because they officiate not in their own name. So the Old Non-Conformists; "It hath evermore been "held for a truth in the Church of God, that al- "though sometimes the evil hath chief authority in "the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments; yet "forasmuch as they do not the same in their own "name but in Christs, and minister by his commission "and authority, we may use their Ministry both in "hearing the Word and receiving the Sacraments; "neither is the effect of Christs Ordinance taken a- "way by their wickedness. 2. The vertue of the Ordinance doth not depend upon their goodness but Gods promise. So Mr Rogers saith of Prayer; *If this burden [of bad Ministers] must be born, I ask, if among many sweet liberties we enjoy, we may not joyn in Prayer with them, if we can pray in faith, seeing their unworthiness cannot withhold the fruit of Gods promise*

promise from us which is to one kind of Prayer as well as another. So saith Mr Cradacot of the Word; "Take heed, saith he, of being leavened with prejudice against the Ministry of the Word, because of the misdemeanors or miscarriage of the Minister. It is the word of the Lord which converts, not the Person of the dispenser or speaker. Hence it was that the Ministry of the Scribes and Pharisees was not to be rejected but to be esteemed, so long as they failed not in the substance thereof, &c. I conceive its a rare thing for unconverted Ministers to convert, and yet we must remember not to tye the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments to the goodness or badness of a Ministers Person. So when its objected; *How can we expect a blessing upon the labours of such though they preach truth?* Mr. Nye replys. *Ans. 1. The mixtures in Sermons are nearest, the irregularities of their calling next, the sins of their conversations furthest from their Doctrine, and therefore have less efficacy at such a distance to prejudice it.* *Ans. 2. Its Gods word and not their own they preach, &c.* 3. That if Persons themselves do believe and are sincere, they are, notwithstanding such a Ministry, accepted. *The sacrifice of a faithful Elkanah, saith one, was pleasing to God, even when Hophni and Phineas were Priests.* From all which we find some declaring, that notwithstanding this they would Communicate. So a Reverend Person; "The Peoples prejudices against the Liturgy, are grounded for the most part upon the wicked lives of those that are the most constant readers and frequenters of it [doubtless the Author if he had considered this, would rather have said that they are grounded upon the wicked lives of some of those that read and frequent it.] "I shall never upon that account cease to joyne

Farewel Sermons, Vol. 3. p. 22, 23.

Case of great use, p. 14.

Englands Remembrancer, Sermon. 4. p. 94.

Bonafus Vapourians, p. 133.

" in

Pastor's Legacy, p. 125.

"in Prayers and to hear Sermons. Others we find exhorting their Auditors to attend even upon such. So Mr R. Fairclough in his Farewel Sermons; *Get all good from, shew all duty to him that follows----* If he should be weak or evil, yet while he preacheth truths, while he sits in Moses Chair, hear him seriously, and carry your selves towards him as becomes a People to their Minister.

Non-Conformists Plea for Conformists, p. 12. & 23.

I have thus far considered the case of scandalous Ministers, because many make it an objection, as well those that are not concerned as those that are. Otherwise it must be acknowledged, that England was never better provided with a learned and pious Ministry than at present; *who have as good understanding, preach as good Doctrine, do as much good by their Preaching as any others*, as a late writer doth confess. But though many Congregations are well supplied with a Pious, Able, and Industrious Ministry, yet there are few or none but what have some, more or less amongst the Laity, that are (as it may be supposed) not fit to be received into Communion with a Church, or to be communicated with. This brings me to the next thing in Worship, which is,

On the Sacrament, p. 235.

4. The case of mixed Communion. *This is a plea, saith Mr. Vines, that is plausible to ease capacities, because it pretends to set up holiness of Ordinances and People, but what the eminent Dissenters do utterly disclaim; Mr. Vines saith it is Donatistical, and others, as Mr. Brinsley and Mr. Jenkin, that its the common plea or pretence which for the most part hath been taken up by all Schismatics in defence of their separation from the Church; and therefore that it is necessary the People should be untaught it, as Mr. Baxter doth advise. And as they do disclaim it, so they declare that those that*

Brinsley's Arraignment, p. 37, 38.
Jenkin on Jude, v. 19.
Bailly's dissuasive, p. 22.
Sacril. desert. p. 97.

that separate upon this account do it very unjustly ^a; that the scandals of professors are ground of mourning, but not of separation ^b; that there may be a sufficient cause to cast out obstinate sinners, and yet not sufficient cause for one to leave the Church, though such be not cast out ^c. That "the suffering of prophane and scandalous livers to continue in the Church, and partake in the Sacrament, is doubtless a great sin; yet the godly are not presently to separate from it. There is, saith Mr Burroughs, an error on both sides; either those that think it concerns them not at all with whom they come to the Sacrament, or those that if they do what they can to keep the scandalous away, and yet they should be suffered to come, that they themselves may not come to partake of it. This both the Presbyterians and Independents so far agree in; and for this their opinion they urge several Arguments.

First, Its no where commanded, but is a vain pretending to holiness above rule and example, saith Mr Vines. "Its no duty, as he elsewhere saith, because there is no command; its no duty, and therefore we read not this word, *come forth*, in any of the Epistles written to the seven Churches, against which Christ saith he hath such and such things. "They that lived in the impurer are not called forth into the purer, but there are promises made to them that keep themselves pure, and duties enjoined to them toward the impurer part. For we may not make every Disease the Plague. Shall the Sons of God, the Angels, forsake the Lords presence, because Satan came also amongst them, &c. The Provincial Assembly of London doth affirm; In the Church of Corinth was such a profane mixture at the Sacrament, as we believe few, if any of our Congregations can be charged withal: And yet the Apostle doth

not

^a *Cawdrey's Reformation* promoted, p. 131.

^b *Manton on Jude*, p. 456.

^c *Vines on Sacrament*, p.

242.

Platform c. 14. §. 8.

V. Cotton's Holiness of Churchmembers, p. 2.

Gospel Worsh. 11.

p. 242.

Arg. I.

On Sacrament, p. 246.

p. 31.

Vindicat. of Presbyt. Govern. p. 134. *Brinsley's Arraignment*. p. 47.

Firmin's Separation examined, p. 40.
Cawdry's Church Reformat p. 71.
Theodulius, p. 74.

not persuade the godly party to separate, much less to gather a Church out of a Church. From which consideration Mr. Tombs concludes; "Sure it can be no sin in any Person to joyn in the true Worship and service of God with any, if he have no command to withdraw himself from that service because of their presence, nor power to exclude them, and yet is bound to the duties there performed.

Survey of Discipline, Pref. A. 3.
Platform, c. 14. §. 9.

Nay, they do not only plead that its not commanded, but that its forbidden and unlawful. So Mr Hooker; *To separate from a Church because of the sin of some Worshippers is unlawful.* So the *New England Ministers* do declare; "As separation from a Church, wherein prophane and scandalous livers are tolerated, is not presently necessary: So for the Members thereof, otherwise worthy, hereupon to abstain from Communion with such a Church, in the participation of the Sacraments, is unlawful.

Arg. 2.

Grave confutation, part 3. p. 53.

On the Sacrament, p. 242. & p. 31, 32.

Gospel Worship, Sermon. 11. p. 236, 237.

Secondly, They plead, that the communicating in Gods service with open sinners, whom the Godly in some of our Assemblies are enforced to communicate with, is not sufficient to make such prophane, or to pollute to them the holy things of God: So the old Non-Conformists. So Mr Vines; *The presence of wicked men at Gods Ordinances, pollutes not them that are neither necessary to their sin, nor yet to their presence there.* This Mr Burroughs disclaims; *You are not defiled by the meer presence of wicked men in the Sacrament (for that is a meer deceit and gull, that some would put upon men that differ from them) but thus are you defiled if you do not your duty, and the uttermost you are able, to purge them out.* But if this be done according to the power and capacity Persons are in, its universally granted that the Innocent shall not suffer for the Nocent. So Mr Ball;

Ball; "The precept of debarring scandalous offenders bindeth them to whom God hath given this power, and them only so far as God hath put it in their power. But God regularly doth not leave that power in the hand of one single Steward, or some few private Christians--- And if the Steward, or one or few private Christians, cannot debar the unworthy from the Lords Table, it is manifest the Ordinance of God is not defiled to them by the presence of the wicked, whom they desire to reform or expel, but cannot, because power is not in their hand to do it lawfully.

Tryal, c. 10.
p. 191. 205.

V. Jeans discourse on the Lords Supper.
Rutherford right of Presbyt.

This they confirm, 1. From the examples of the Prophets and good men, who of old joyned with many that were notoriously stained with gross sins; from the practice of our Saviour that communicated with such in the publick service of God; from the practice of Christians in Apostolical times, all which the old Non-Conformists do insist upon. This is also pleaded by those of *New-England* and others.

Grave confut. part 3. p. 53. & 55.

Ball's Tryal, p. 211.
Platform, c. 14. §. 8.

Blake Vindict. p. 235.

This would make all the sins of the Congregation to be ours. So *Mr Baxter*; "If you be wanting in your duty to reform it, it is your sin; but if bare presence made their sin to be ours, it would also make all the sins of the Assembly ours.

Christian Directory, p. 747.
V. Non-Conformists no Schismatics, p. 16.

From all which it appears that their sence is, that scandalous Members are no sufficient reason for Separation; for that must be, either be cause its commanded in Scripture, or that those that do communicate with such, are in so doing corrupted also; but if neither of these be, then we may safely Communicate with such, or in a Church where such are without sin.

Thirdly, To separate upon this ground, is to maintain a Principle destructive to the Communion of

Arg. 3.
Vines on the Sacrament, p. 244.

Infant-Bap-
tism, p. 102.
V. *Bains* on the
Ephes. c. 1. v.
1. p. 5.

In Proverb. Ed-
wards Apol.

the Church visible, which consists of good and bad. This Mr *Cotton* is peremptory in ; " It is utterly un-
" true to say that Christ admits not of any dead
" Plants to be set in his Vineyard, or that he takes
" not to himself a compounded body of living and
" dead Members, or that the Church of God is not
" a mixed Company, &c. From the ill effects of
which, Mr *Cartwright* used to call this Separation,
upon pretence of greater purity, *the white Devil*.

And because there are some Scriptures that seem
to look this way, and are made use of by those that
make mixed Communion an argument for Separati-
on ; therefore they have taken off the force of them.

Object. 1. If a Brother be a Fornicator, &c. the Apostle ex-
horteth not to eat with him.

To this they answer,

Ans. 1. That if it be meant of excluding such an one from
Church-Communion, it must be done by the Church
and not a private person. *But you are not command-
ed to separate from the Church, if they exclude him not ;*
So Mr *Baxter*, &c.

Ans. 2. That it concerns not religious but civil Commu-
nion, and that not all civil society or commerce, but
familiar only. For which they produce several rea-
sons, 1. They argue from the notion of *eating bread,*
which is a token of love and friendship in phrase of
Scripture, not to partake of or to be shut from the Table,
is a sign of familiarity broken off. So Mr. *Ball*, &c.
2. " The eating which is here forbidden is allowed
" to be with an Heathen, but its the civil eating
" which is only allowed to be with an Heathen ;
" therefore its the civil eating which is forbidden to
" be with a Brother. So Mr *Jenkin*, &c. 3. " The
" eating here forbidden is for the punishment
" of the nocent not of the innocent. To these
there

Ball's Tryal, p.
200.
Brinsley's Ar-
raignment, p.
45.
Jenkin on Jude,
v. 19.
*Tombs's Theodu-
lia*, p. 210.

there are added others by the old Non-Conformists.

As for other objections they are also undertaken by the same hands, and to which Mr Baxter's answer is sufficient; *If you mark all the Texts in the Gospel, you shall find that all the separation which is commanded in such cases (besides our separation from the Infidels and Idolatrous World, or Antichristian and Heretical Confederacies, and No-Churches) is but one of these two sorts, 1. Either that the Church cast out the impenitent by the power of the Keys. Or, 2. That private men avoid all private familiarity with them; but that the private Members should separate from the Church, because such persons are not cast out of it, shew me one Text to prove it if you can.* "This, saith Mr Vines, hath not

Grave Confut.
part 4. p. 57.
Tomb's Theodulia, p. 167.
Cawdrey's Reformat. p. 75.
Cure Dir. 9.
P. 81.

"a syllable of Scripture to allow or countenance it. But supposing it be allowed that we ought not

On the Sacrament, p. 246.
Tomb's Theod. p. 128.

to separate from a Church, where corrupt Members are tolerated or connived at under some present circumstances (as for want of due proof, or through particular favour) yet it seems to be allowable where there is no Discipline exercised, or taken care of. For then we are without an Ordinance. To avoid this objection, I shall consider,

2. The case with respect to Discipline, and shall shew from them, 1. That the want of that or defects in it are no sufficient reason for Separation. 2. What Discipline is exercised or taken care of in the Church of England.

The former of these they do own and prove.

First, As Discipline is not necessary to the being of a Church. This was of old maintained by Mr Cartwright, who thus argues; "That Church Assemblies are builded by Faith only on Christ the Foundation, the which Faith so being, whatsoever is wanting of that which is commanded, or remain-

Arg. 1.
T. C's. Letter to Harrison against Separation in the Defence of the Admonit. p. 98, 99.

“ing of that which is forbidden, is not able to put
 “that Assembly from the right and title of so being
 “the Church of Christ--- For though there be many
 “things necessary for every Assembly, yet they be
 “necessary to the comely and stable being, and not
 “simply to the being of the Church. And after-
 ward he gives an instance in the Dutch Assemblies
 (or Lutheran Churches) which, he saith, *are main-*
ed in Discipline. So Dr T. Goodwin; “Whereas
 “now in some of the Parishes of this Kingdom, there
 “are many Godly Men that do constantly give them-
 “selves up to the Worship of God in publick, &c.
 “These notwithstanding their mixture and want of
 “Discipline, I never thought for my part, but that
 “they were true Churches of Christ, and Sister
 “Churches, and so ought to be acknowledged. So
 that if Discipline be not essential to a true Church,
 and a true Church is not to be separated from (as has
 been proved above) then the want of Discipline is
 no sufficient reason for Separation.

P. 106.

Com. on the
 Ephes. p. 487,
 488.

Arg. 2.

Vindiciæ c. 31.
 p. 236, 238.

V. Grave Con-
 fut. part 1. p.
 18.

Secondly, This they further prove by an induction
 of particulars. This way Mr. Blake proceeds in;
 “Discipline was neglected in the Church of *Israel*,
 “yet none of the Prophets or men of God ever
 “made attempt of getting up purer select Churches,
 “or made separation from that which was in this
 “sort faulty. All was not right in the exercise of
 “Discipline in the Churches planted by the Apostles,
 “some are censured as foully faulty, &c. yet nothing
 “heard by way of advice for any to make Sepa-
 “ration, nor any one instance of a Separatist gi-
 “ven.

Vines on Sacra-
 ment, c. 19. p.
 226.

To come lower, we are told by a learned person,
 that *the Helvetian or Switzerland Churches claim to be*
Churches, and have the Notes, Word, and Sacraments,
though

though the order of Discipline be not settled among them, and I am not he that shall blot out their name.

V. Gillespie's Nil respondet, p. 33.

To come nearer home, it was so in the late times when this was wanting, as was acknowledged ^a, and of which Mr. Vines saith ^b, *we know rather the name than the thing.* And if we shall look into the several Church-Assemblies amongst the Dissenters, we shall find, that there are many Preachers without full pastoral charge, as it is acknowledged, and that

^a Knutton's Seven Queries. Bynstey's Arraign. p. 48.
^b On Sacram. p. 219.
Troughton's A-pol. p. 65.

have little authority over their flocks in this kind, that have not so much as the name of Discipline amongst them. And so they have little reason to justify themselves in a Separation by such an argument, that will as well wound themselves as those they bend it against; and they that do so are guilty of Sin. So Mr. Baxter; *Many that observe the pollution of the Church by the great neglect of holy Discipline, avoid this error by turning to a sinful Separation.* I shall conclude

Cure Dir. 47.
p. 231.

this with that grave advice of Dr. Owen; "When any Church, whereof a man is by his own consent antecedently a Member, doth fall in part or in whole from any of those Truths which it hath professed, or when it is overtaken with a neglect of Discipline or Irregularities in its Administration; such a one is to consider, that he is placed in his present state by Divine Providence, that he may orderly therein endeavour to put a stop unto such defections, and to exercise his Charity, Love, and Forbearance towards the persons of them whose miscarriages at present he cannot remedy. In such cases there is a large and spacious Field for Wisdom, Patience, Love and prudent Zeal to exercise themselves. And it is a most erroneous imagination, that Separation is the only cure for Church disorders. If this advice be good in one

Evangel. Love, c. 3. p. 77.

case,

case, it is so in another ; and if it were well understood, and faithfully followed, this argument would be of little or no force.

2. I shall shew how little this plea of the Defective Discipline reaches the case. Its granted that there is such a Power and Authority of Ecclesiastical Discipline resident in the Church of *England*, that *if open and scandalous persons are not cast out, the fault is in the Governours, for the Law takes order they shall be*, as Dr *Bryan* saith^a. And the power of suspension put thereby into the Ministers hands is so evident, that after Dr *Collins* had proved it from the Rubricks, Canons, &c. he concludes^b, *its plain that the judgment and practice of the Church of England in all times, ever since it was a Church, hath been to suspend some from the Table of the Lord. So that if there be defects, through some past and present obstructions in the exercise of Discipline, yet cannot the Church properly stand charged with them, as is acknowledged^c ; or whatever may be charged upon the Church, there can be no sufficient cause from a defect, remissness or corruption therein, for a Separation from it. This was the constant judgment of the old Non-Conformists, which I shall transcribe from a grave Author ; " Those, saith he, that for many Years together, during the Reign of the three last Princes, denied to come up to a full Conformity to this Church, had a low opinion of the Discipline then exercised (of which they have left behind them large evidences) yet how tender were they of the Churches honour to keep Christians in Communion ? how zealous were they against Separation ? as may appear in the labours of Mr *Parker*, Mr *Paget*, Mr *Ball*. Mr *Brightman* laid us low enough, when he did not only parallel us with*

" luke-warm

^a Dwelling with God, Sermon. 6. p. 301.

V. Grave Confut. part 1. p. 17.

Firmin Separation examined, p. 28.

^b Provocator provocatus, p. 151. & 154.

V. *Vines* on Sacrament, c. 19. p. 233.

Brinsley's Arraign. p. 40. *Cawdrey's* Church Reformat. p. 122.

^c *Brinsley's* Arraign. p. 48.

Jenk. on Jude v. 19.

Blakes's Vindiciae, c. 31. p. 236.

“ luke-warm *Laodicea*, but made that Church the
 “ Type and we the Antitype, by reason of our Di-
 “ scipline ; yet how zealous is he against Separation
 “ from these Assemblers , and breaks out in these
 “ words ; *Therefore their error is wicked and blasphemous, who so forsake the Church, as if Christ were*
 “ *altogether banished thence.*

Having thus far considered what opinion the graver sort of the Non-Conformists have of Communion with a Church, and what rules they do lay down about it, and shew'd that according to those rules, Separation from the Church is unlawful. I shall close all with the last advice given by a Reverend Person to his Parishioners in a Farewel Sermon in these words ; “ Take heed of extreams. It is the
 “ ordinary Temptation in a time of differences, to
 “ think we cannot run too far from them we differ
 “ from, and so whilst we decline one Rock we split
 “ upon another. Remember the old Non-Conformists
 “ were equal Enemies to Superstition and Separation.
 “ Maintain (I beseech you) sober Principles, such
 “ as these are, that every defective Ministry is not a
 “ false Ministry ; that sinful super-additions do not
 “ nullifie Divine institutions ; that sinful defects in
 “ Ordinances do not hinder the saving effects of
 “ them. That there is a difference betwixt directing
 “ a Worship, prescribing things simply evil and manifestly idolatrous, and directing about Worship,
 “ things doubtfully good being injoynd, but the
 “ unquestionable substance of Worship being maintained. This latter doth not justify Separation.

And that the supposed corruptions in the Church of *England* are of that nature, as do not affect the substance of it, nor are such but what may be safely communicated in, I shall now proceed to shew from them.

Englands Remembrance,
 Sermon. 16. p.
 454.

3. Genera 1.

Letter of the
Minist. of *Old*
Engl. p. 12, 13.
Bryan's Dwel-
ling with God,
p. 311.
Tomb's Theod.
p. 230.
Troughton's A-
pol c. 7. p. 68.
Owen's Peace-
Offer. p. 17.
Mischief of Im-
positions, E-
pist. Dedic.

3. I shall consider what opinion the eminent Non-Conformists have had of the several practices in the Church of *England* that are enjoined upon those that hold Lay-Communion with it, which respect Forms, Gestures, Time, &c. In general they acknowledge that they are things tolerable, and what no Church is without more or less ^d. 2. That they are not sufficient to hinder Communion. 3. That they are but few ^e.

First, Forms, and so its required of the Members of the Church that they joyn in the use of Liturgy or Common-Prayer. For the better understanding their judgment in this matter, I shall shew what their opinion is of Forms of Prayer, of publick Forms, of Forms prescribed, and of that particular Form of Divine Service used in this Church.

1. The use of Forms is declared by them to be a thing lawful in it self, and what God hath left us at liberty to use or not to use as we see occasion. So

Tryal, c. 2. p.
36. & c. 8. p.
131.

Mr. Ball; "The word of God doth not prescribe any particular Form, stinted or not stinted, as necessary, but doth warrant both as allowable; for where nothing is in particular commanded touching the external Form of Words and Order, in

^a*Sacril. desert.*

p. 98, 99.

Cure of Church

Divis. p. 175.

Tomb's Theod.

p. 137.

^b*Discourse of*

the Work of

the Spirit in

Prayer, p. 220,

235.

V. Dissenting

Brethren in 32

Quests, p. 55.

"which our Petitions should be presented to the Lord, there we are left at liberty. And to put Religion in reading or uttering Words in a stinted or conceived Form, what is it less than Superstition? Of the same mind is *Mr. Baxter* and others ^g. And even *Dr. Owen*, though he doth disallow the composing Forms of Prayer for our own private use, yet at the same time declares ^h, that he doth not argue against Forms of Prayer as unlawful to be used. And he adds a little after; *If they appear not contrary unto, or inconsistent with, or are not used in a way exclusive*

exclusive of that work of the Holy Spirit in prayer, which we have described from Scripture, &c. I shall not contend with any about them.

But they do not only assert, but they also undertake to prove the lawfulness of Formsⁱ, from the nature, use, and ends of prayer, and charge the contrary opinion with Enthusiasm^k, and Novelty^l.

Secondly, As to Forms in publick, they declare, 1. That it is lawful to use them, and that *this was the Tenent of all our best and most judicious Divines^m. This Dr. Owen is cautious of denying, who saith, Supposing that those who make use of, and plead for Forms of prayer, especially in publick, do in a due manner prepare themselves for it by holy meditation, &c. I do not judge that there is any such evil in them as that God will not communicate his spirit to any in the use of them.*

They do not only grant it lawful to use them, but that it's expedient. So Mr. Egerton declares, "As for the publick Congregation, special care must be had that nothing be done in Praying, Preaching or Administring the Sacraments, but what is decent and orderly, because there many Eyes do see us, and many Ears hear us; and upon this account, it is expedient for the most part to keep a constant

Form both of matter and words. Mr. Bradshaw pleads for it (as Mr. Gataker informs us in his life) for the avoiding hesitation, which in Prayer is more offensive than in other discourse. And when in a late collection of Sermons we find it complained of, that in our days some have such Schismatical Phrases, Notions, and Doctrines in Preaching, Praying, and Praising, that a sober Christian cannot say, Amen; it renders a Form so much the more considerable.

They declare that publick Forms were universally used. So Mr. Clark saith, That "set Forms of

ⁱ Ball's Tryal, c. 2.
^{Rogers} Tr. 223.
^{Rymer's} Dwelling with God, p. 307.

^k Grave confut. Ep. to Reader. Continuat. of Morn. Exer. p. 1006.

^l Preston Sermon on Jo. 1. 16.
^m Clark's Lives of 10 Divines, p. 255.

Ball's Tryal, p. 11.
^{Owen's} Disc. of Prayer, p. 231.
^{Pract. of Christianity}, c. 11. p. 691. Edit. 5.

Life of Mr. Bradshaw, in Mr. Clark's Collection in Fol. p. 67.

Continuat. of Morn. Exer. Sermon. 31. p. 1006.

³ Collection of the Lives of 10 Divines, p. 255.
Life of M. C. 1. p. 67.

"Prayer are according to the practice of all Churches, even the best Reformed; yea, and Mr. *Smith* himself saith, upon the Lords Prayer (though as then he was warping, and afterwards wandred far in the ways of Separation) that it was the practice of the ancient Church, and of all the Reformed Churches in Christendom, of the Churches immediately after the Apostles; nay (saith he) of the Church in the time of the Apostles, as may be probably gathered out of 1 Cor. 14. 26. This hath also been the practice of the best Lights that ever were set up in the Churches of Christ. 4. Accordingly this was the practice of the old Non-Conformists. So Mr. *Clark*; *It is very well known that the flower of our own Divines went on in this way, when they might have done otherwise, if they had pleased, in their Prayers before Sermons.* This we are told of Mr. *Bradshaw* and Mr. *Cartwright*^a. And we find Mr. *Hilderham's* Prayer before Sermon Printed^b, and others. This was so universally and constantly practised, that Mr. *Clark* tells us^c, that *the first man who brought conceived Prayer into use in those parts where he lived, was Mr. Sam. Crook, who dyed but in the Year 1649.*

Ibid.

^a *Bradshaw's* Life publish'd by Mr. *Clark* in Fol. p. 67.

^b His Doctrine of Fasting and Prayer, An. 1642.

^c Collection of 10 Lives, 4^o. p. 38.

Thirdly, As to prescribed Forms and Liturgies, of this Mr. *Ball* saith; *I have shewed the use of a stinted Liturgy lawful and allowable by the Word of God, of ancient use in the Churches of Christ, approved by all Reformed Churches, which is a very convenient method for the consideration of their judgment in the case.* 1. They grant that they are lawful, *its contrary to no precept or commandment directly or by lawful consequence*, saith Mr. *Ball*. So Mr. *Norton* of New-England doth determine; "Such things being observ'd as are to be observed, it may be lawful
"ful

Tryal, c. 1. p. 5. c. 3. p. 23.

Answ. to Apollonies, c. 13.

“ful to use Forms of Prayers, &c. prescribed in the
 “Church; neither are the Churches which use them
 “guilty of Superstition, Will-worship, and violating
 “the second Commandment. And Dr. Owen him- Discourse of
Prayer, p. 222.
&c. 235.
 self complys with it, who yields, That *Men or
Churches may agree upon a prescribed Form by common
consent, as judging and avowing it best for their own
edification*; and only argues against prescribing such
Forms of Prayer universally, in opposition, and unto
the exclusion of free Prayer. 2. They grant that they
are not only lawful, but that there are footsteps of
this way of Worship both in the Old and New Te-
stament, as Mr. Tombs and others have shewed, and
Mr. Ainsworth himself (that did otherwise argue a-
gainst them) doth confess ^d. 3. They grant that
they are very ancient in the Christian Church: The
Christian Churches of ancient times for the space of this
1400 Years at least, if not from the Apostles time have
had their stinted Liturgies, saith Mr Ball^e: And they
answer Objections to the contrary ^f. 4. They grant
that in the best Reformed, nay in all Reformed
Churches, they are not only used and tolerated,
but also useful and expedient. 5. That those amongst
us, to whom the use of the Common-Prayer hath
been thought most burdensome, *have from time to time
professed their liking and approbation of a stinted Liturgy*,
as Mr. Ball assures us. 6. That they thought it al-
together unlawful to separate from a Church for the
sake of stinted Forms and Liturgies. This is not on-
ly frequently affirmed by Mr. Ball ^g, but little less
even by Mr. Norton ^h, who saith, *It is lawful to em-
brace Communion with Churches, where such Forms
in publick Worship are in use; neither doth it lye as
a duty on a Believer, that he disjoyn and separate
himself from such a Church*: And they give this rea-

^d Tombs's Theo-
dulia, p. 221.

^e B. v. Cure, p.
175.

^f Ball's Tryal, p.
108, 129.

^g Grave Confut.
p. 12, 13.

^h Ainsworth's
Annot. on Ex.

12. 8.
ⁱ Tryal, p. 56,

106, 111, 138.
& p. 80.

^j Tombs's Theo-
dulia, p. 221.

^k Ball's Tryal, p.
108, &c.

^l Rogers's Trea-
tises, p. 224.

^m Tombs's Theod.
p. 224.

ⁿ Ball's Tryal, p.
56, 106, 120.

^o Tryal, p. 121.

^p Tryal, p. 121,
129, 140, 156.

^q Resp. ad A-
poll. c. 13.

Sacril. desert.

p. 102.

Defence, part

2. p. 65.

Ball's Tryal, p.

138.

Rogers's 7 Tr.

p. 224.

son for it, that then they must separate from all Churches. So Mr *Baxter, &c.* "Is it not a high degree of Pride to conclude, that almost all Christs Churches in the World for these thirteen hundred Years at least to this day, have offered such Worship unto God, as that you are obliged to avoid it; and that almost all the Catholick Church on Earth this day is below your Communion for using Forms; and that even *Calvin* and the Presbyterians, *Cartwright*, *Hildersham*, and the old Non-Conformists were unworthy your Communion. I know there are several Objections against Forms of Prayer, but I know also that these are answered by them. But since the most common is, that of quenching and stinting the Spirit; I shall briefly give their sense of it. They say,

Rogers's 7 Tr.

Tr. 3. c. 4. p.

223.

Ball's Tryal, c.

5. p. 83.

1. To say that persons should use no set Form, but pray as moved by the Spirit, is a fond error.

2. They say, that the Spirit instructeth us what to ask, not in what phrase of speech. It stirreth up in us holy desires, but giveth not ability suddenly and without help to express and lay open our hearts in fit method and significant Words---- Ability of speech is a common gift of the Spirit, which the Lord bestoweth upon good and bad, &c.

Ibid. p. 91.

3. That the measure of the Spirit standeth not in Words and Forms, but in fervent sighs and groans.

Rogers, Ibid.

4. That "there is nothing letteth, but that in such Forms the hearers hearts may profitably go with the same both to humble, to quicken, and to comfort. And Dr *Owen* cannot deny but that they may be for edification, and that persons in the use of them may have Communion with God.

Disc. of Pray-

er, p. 222, 231,

232.

5. They say that the Scriptures insisted upon in this case are grounded upon mistakes, and are misapplied,

applied, as Mr Tombs in particular hath clearly manifested. Theodulia, p. 164, 238.

Fourthly, I shall consider what their opinion is as to the English Liturgy or Common Prayer, both as to the Liturgy it self and Communion in it. As to the Liturgy it self, its acknowledged,

1. That the matter for the most part is good, sound and divine, and that *there is not any doctrinal passage in any of the Prayers, that may not bear a good construction, and so Amen may be said to it*, as Dr Bryan with others do maintain. Bryan's Dwelling with God, Sermon 6. p. 312. Baxt. Def. part 1. p. 29, 59. Croston's Refor. no Separ. p. 25. T.D. Jerubbaal p. 35.

2. That as no Church for this 1400 Years has been without its publick Forms, so ours is the best. So the old Non-Conformists; *Compare the Doctrines, Prayers, Rites at those times [throughout] in use in the Churches with ours, and in all these (blessed be the name of the Lord) we are more pure than they* And its not much short that we find in Mr Baxter in the name of the present Non-Conformists. Letter of the Ministr. in Old Engl. p. 12.

3. That which is accounted faulty is tolerable, and hinders not but that its acceptable to God, and edifying to pious and well-disposed Persons.

Tolerable. So Mr Corbet; "The Worship contained in the Liturgy may lawfully be partaken in, it being sound for substance in the main, and the mode thereof of being laudable in divers Forms and Orders, and passable in the most, though in some offensive, in convenient, or less perfect." Plea for Lay-Communion, p. 2. V. Ball's Tryal, c. 9. p. 158.

Acceptable to God. So the old Non-Conformists; *In them that join with the Prayers, according to Christs command (and liberty of absence from Christ hath not been shewed) notwithstanding the corruptions, we hold the Prayers to be an holy acceptable Sacrifice to God, &c.* Letter of Ministers in Old Engl. p. 13.

Edifying to well-disposed Persons. To this purpose

Mr

Treat. 3. c. 4. M^r. *Hilderſham*, M^r. *Rogers*, &c.
p. 224.

Plea, p. 1.
ⁱ *Corbet's* Plea,
p. 3.

^k *Gifford's* plain
Declaration.

Bill's Tryal, c.
7. p. 121.

Sacril deſert.
p. 105.

^l Mr. *Baxter's*
Deſ. of Cure,
p. 68.

^m *Ball's* Tryal,
p. 121. c. 8. p.
155.

ⁿ Letter of Mi-
niſters of *Old*
Engl. p. 14.

^o Mr. *Read's*
Caſe p. 7.

Mr. *Humphry's*
Healing Paper,

p. 5.
Mr. *Baxter's*

Diſp. 4. of
Church Gover.

p. 354.
Mr. S. *Fair-*

clough's Lite,
p. 157.

Tryal. c. 8. p.
152.

And accordingly M^r. *Corbet* profeſſeth his own ex-
perience ; “ Though I judge their Form of Worſhip
“ to be in many reſpects leſs perfect than is deſired,
“ yet I have found my heart ſpiritually affected and
“ raiſed towards God therein, and more eſpecially in
“ receiving the Lords Supper. I judge this Form may
“ be uſed formally by the formal, and ſpiritually by
“ thoſe that are ſpiritual. It is my part to make the
“ beſt of it, being the eſtabliſhed Form. As to Com-
munion in the Liturgy, it is granted, 1. That there is
no cauſe to renounce it, or the Communion of the
Church for it ⁱ, and that ſo to do is a Sin ^k. 2. That
all the Reformed Churches in Chriſtendom, do com-
monly profeſs to hold Communion with the Engliſh
Churches in the Liturgy, if they come among us where
it is uſed ^l. 3. Its declared on the part of the old
Non-Conformiſts, *That they ordinarily and conſtantly*
uſed the Communion-Book in their publick Miniſtrati-
ons ^m; and that the People generally were in *their*
days ſatisfied in it ⁿ. And for the preſent its de-
clared, *We can lawfully not only hear Common-Prayer,*
but read it our ſelves ^o.

I ſhall not trouble the Reader with the ſeveral Ob-
jections againſt the Liturgy, and the answers return'd
to them by the old and preſent Non-Conformiſts, but
ſhall content my ſelf with that, which it ſeems *was*
much inſiſted upon in the days of M^r. *Ball*, and their
reply to it.

Objec^t. *The Liturgy in the whole matter and Form thereof*
is too like unto the Maſs-Book.

Anſw. “ If the Liturgy be Antichriſtian, it is ſo either in
“ reſpect of the matter or of the Form. Not of the
“ matter; for that which properly belonged to An-
“ tichriſt, the foul and groſs errors, is purged out.
Not

" Not of the Form; for Order and Phrase of speech is
 " not properly Antichristian.

2. " That the English Liturgy is gathered according P. 155.
 " to the Ancients, the purest of them, and is not a V. Letter of
the Ministr. in
Old Engl. p. 14.
 " collection out of the Mass-Book, but a refining of Dr. Bryan's
Dwelling with
God, p. 309,
310.
 " that Liturgy which heretofore had been stained Mr. Baxter's
Cure p. 281.
 " with the Mass, &c. and is not a translation of the
 " Mass, but a restitution of the ancient Liturgy.

Thus saith that Learned Person and much more,
 to whom many others do likewise consent. And in
 this Mr. Tombs is so zealous, that he concludes; Theodulia, p.
102.
*I cannot but judge that either much ignorance, or much
 malice it is that makes any traduce the English Common-
 Prayer Book, as if it were the Popish Mass-Book, or
 as bad as it, and to deter men from joyning with those
 Prayers and Services therein, which are good, as if it
 were joyning with Antichrist the Pope, (when they can
 hardly be ignorant that the Martyrs in Queen Mary's
 days were burnt for it) is impudent falsehood.*

Having thus far considered the Forms, I shall now §. 3.
 proceed to shew what their opinion is of the ge-
 stures required in Lay-Communion, such as kneeling
 at the Sacrament, and standing up at the Creed and
 Gospels.

As to Kneeling,

1. Its granted that the posture in the Sacrament
 is not determined. So Mr. Baxter; *I never yet heard* Christ. Direc.
P. 616.
any thing to prove Kneeling unlawful, there is no Word
of God for or against any gesture.

2. It is granted whatever the gesture of our Savi- V. Falso's Dia-
logue 'twixt a
Minister and a
Quaker.
Noye's Temple
measured, p.
81.
Theod. p. 168.
 our in it was, yet that doth not oblige. This Mr Tombs
 hath undertaken to shew, 1. " Because this gesture
 " seems not to have been of choice used by Christ.
 " 2. Because St Paul omits the gesture, which he would
 " not have done, if it had been binding. 3. He men-
 tions

"tions the night, and calls it the Lords Supper, and
 "if the time be not necessary, much less the ge-
 "sture. 4. If the gesture doth oblige, then Christi-
 "ans must use the self same that Christ used.

3. It is granted that the nature of the ordinance
 doth not forbid kneeling. So Mr *Bains*, *kneeling*
is not unbecoming a Feaster, when our joy must be
mingled with reverent trembling. So Mr *Baxter*,
 "The nature of the ordinance is mixed. And if
 "it be lawful to take a pardon from the King upon
 "our knees, I know not what can make it unlawful to
 "take a sealed pardon from Christ by his Ambassador
 upon our Knee. Hence Mr *Bayley* reckons it as an er-
 ror of some Independents, that they accounted *sit-*
ting necessary as a rite significant of fellowship with Christ,
and a part of our imitation of him, and for both these
reasons, declared it necessary to keep on their hats at the
time of participation.

Letters, Ibid.

4. It is granted not to be idolatrous. So Mr *Bains*.
 "Kneeling is neither an occasion, nor by participati-
 on Idolatry: kneeling never bred Bread-worship.
 V *Baxter*, Christ. "And our doctrine of the Sacrament, known to all
 Direct. p. 616. "the world, doth free us from suspicion of adoration
 "in it.

Theodulia, p.
 256, &c.

To these Mr *Tombs* adds, "1. that the Papists adore
 "not the bread at putting into their mouths, but
 "at the elevation. It being inconsistent with their
 "principles to worship that which is not above them.
 "2. That the worship of God not directed to a
 "creature, but before it, as an occasional object of
 "adoration to God is not Idolatry. 3. That yet in the
 "Church of *England* the Elements are not occasio-
 nally so, but the benefits of Christ in the Lords Sup-
 per; and 4. Kneeling is not to the Bread, but as the
 signification of an humble and grateful mind, as he
 shews from the Rubrick.

5. Those

Christian Let-
 ters, Let. 24.
 p. 201.

Direct. p. 616.

Diffusive, c.

2 p. 30 & c.

6 p. 121, 122.

V. *Johnson's*

Christian Plea,

Treat. 3. c. 10.

p. 285.

V *Baxter*, Christ.

Direct. p. 616.

V. T. D. *Je-*

rubbaal, p. 41.

& Mr. *Crofton's*

Ans. p. 28.

V. *Ames's* Fresh

Sult, c. 4. § 4.

p. 382.

Perkins's cases.

5thly, Those that do account it inconvenient, yet account it not to be unlawful. Thus Mr Cartwright, *Evangel. Harm. on Luke 22. v. Kneeling in receiving the Sacrament, being incommodious in its own nature, and made far more incommodious by Popish superstition, is not therefore so to be rejected, that we should abstain from the Sacrament (if we cannot otherwise be partakers of it) because the thing is not in its own nature unlawful.* So its said of the old Nonconformists, *Kneeling at the Sacrament was disliked by all, but yet thought tolerable, and that it might be submitted to by some of the most learned.*

From all which we may conclude with Mr. Vines, *On the Sacrament, p. 102.* that the posture being a circumstance of action, as well as the time and place, *is not of the Free-hold of the ordinance;* and with Mr. Baxter, that those that think they must not receive, kneeling, *think erroneously.* As for standing up at the Creed, &c. Mr. Baxter saith, his judgement is for it, *where it is required, and where not doing it would be divisive and scandalous.* Nay elsewhere he saith, that *tis a convenient praising gesture, &c.*

Thus I have considered the most material points, in which the Lay-members of the Church of England are concern'd, and shew'd that the lawfulness of the things injoynd upon such, is declared and justified by the suffrage and judgement of as eminent Nonconformists as have lived in the several ages since that unhappy controversie was first set on foot amongst us. And now what remains, but that every one concerned set himself seriously and impartially to consider it; and it becomes such so to do when they go against the stream of the most experienced writers of their own party, who might pretend to understand the case as well, if not better than any that were conversant in it. It becomes such, "when they bury that under

Ball's Tryal,
Epist. to Read-
er.

"the condemnation of false worship, which the Lord,
"the author of all truth, doth allow in his service.
"When they forsake the prayers of the Congregation,
"and depart from the Table of the Lord, and break off
"society and communion with the Churches of Christ,
" &c. when they expose Religion to contempt, and
"the truth of God to reproach, by the rents and di-
"visions in the Church, as M^r Ball doth represent it.

Defence. p. 17,
52.

It becomes them, *when our division gratifieth the Pa-
pists, and greatly hazardeth the Protestant Religion, and
by it we may lose all which the several parties contend
about, as Mr. Baxter hath proved.*

It becomes them when the Church of *England* is the
bulwark of the Protestant Religion amongst us at home,
and that according to the noted saying of Mr. Eger-
ton, *The withdrawing totally from it, would more effectually
introduce Popery, than all the works of Bellarmine.*

Brinsley's Heal-
ing of Israel's
Breaches, p. 62.

It becomes them when this is the Bulwark of it abroad,
and "all the reformed Churches in the world have a
"venture in this Bottom, which if compar'd to a Fleet,
"the Church of *England* must be acknowledged to be
"the Admiral. And if it go ill with this Church so as
"that miscarry, there is none of the Churches of Christ
"this day under Heaven, but are like to feel it; as
M^r Brinsley discourses.

Dwelling with
God, Sermon 6.
p. 313, 314.

Lastly, It becomes them when divisions and separa-
tions draw down the displeasure of God and lay us o-
pen to his Judgements. Therefore Dr. Bryan after
he hath largely insisted upon the Argument and the
present case amongst us doth thus apply himself, "O
"that I could prevail with you, to lay sadly to heart
"the greatness of the sin of divisions, and the grie-
"vousness of the punishment threatened against it,
"and hath been executed for it; and that the Leaders
"and encouragers of private Christians to make this
"sinful

“sinful separation, would read off, and me ditate up-
 “on St Jude’s Epistle to v. 20. and that the multitudes
 “that are willing to be led by them would follow
 “the prescription of the means here to preserve or
 “recover themselves from this seduction, v. 20, 21.
 “And that both would leave off their reviling the
 “Government Ecclesiastical, and the Ministers
 “that conform, and submissively behave themselves
 “by the example of *Michael*, &c.

I shall conclude the whole with the peaceable and
 pious advice of Mr. *Bains*. “Let every man walk
 “within the compass of his Calling. Whatsoever lyeth
 “not in us to reform, it shall be our zeal and piety
 “to tolerate, and with patience to forbear, espe-
 “cially in things of this nature, which con-
 “cern not so much the outward Communion with
 “God or man essentially required in a visible state,
 “as the due ordering of business in the said Commu-
 “nion, wherein there be many superfluities and de-
 “fects, *salvâ tamen Ecclesiâ*; yea and such a Church
 “notwithstanding, as wherein the best and truest
 “Members (circumstances considered) may have
 “more cause to rejoice than to grieve.

On the Ephes.
 c. 2. p. 297,
 298.

ERRATA.

PAG. 5. l. 25. r. soundness. p. 7. marg. l. 3. continnat. p. 7. marg. l.
 1. Lecture. p. 13. l. 2. Schism. p. 49. l. 32. (,) p. 57. l. 28. because.
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[illegible]

ATK 2 E

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.